A

TREATISE

OF

Excommunication:

WHEREIN

'Tis Fully, Learnedly, and Modeſtly demonſtrated,

THAT

There is no Warrant, Precept, or Preſident, either in the Old or New Teſtament, for Excommunicating any Perſons, or Debarring them the Sacraments, whilſt they make an outward Profeſſion of the true Chriſtian Faith.

Written Originally in Latine,

By the famous and pious

THOMAS ERASTUS Doctor in Phyſick,

About the Year 1568.

Brethren, ye have been called unto LIBERTY; onely uſe not Liberty for an occaſion to the Fleſh, but by LOVE SERVE one another, Gal. 5. v. 13.

LONDON:

Printed for *L. Curtis.* 1682.

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To the Pious

READER,

AND

Such as is ſtudious of Truth,

THOMAS ERASTUS a Phyſician ſends greeting.

LEſt any, lighting upon this Treatiſe, ſhould wonder what Motives or Provocations made me buſie my ſelf in this Controverſie about Excommunication, I ſhall as Conciſely as Truly acquaint the World with the Riſe and Occaſion of it. 'Tis now much about ſixteen years ſince ſome men have fallen into a kind of Excommunicating Frenzy (under the ſpecious Title of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, and as they contend, ſacred in itſelf, *and enjoyn'd the Church by God) and fain would they have the whole Church tainted with the like; that the manner of it* (they propoſe) *ſhould be thus: That a ſelect number of Elders ſhould ſit in the name of the whole Church, and judge who were fit and who unfit to be admitted to the Lords Supper. I could not but wonder to ſee them conſulting of ſuch matters, at ſuch a time when we had neither fit perſons to excommunicate, or to be excommunicated: for ſcarce a thirteenth part of the people underſtood and approved of the Doctrine* of the Reformation, which was then but blooming; *the reſidue were our profeſt Enemies: ſo that no man, who had his*

wits about him, but muſt needs ſee that ſuch a matter muſt unavoidably introduce dangerous Diviſions among us. And therefore I thought it not then ſo proper an Enquiry how ſome might be ſhut out of the Church, as how more might be brought in; and that the beſt thing we could apply our ſelves to, would be the propagating ſaving *Truths. Beſides, they who were to be the Superviſors, were not ſo much ſuperior to the others, in Age, Experience, Parts, Judgment, Virtue, or Eminency, that they could manage ſo weighty a matter with that Port and Dignity that was requiſite. Since therefore I ſaw that their deſires could not have the labour'd Effects, without the Churches Ruine and Subverſion, I was ever and anon cautioning them, that they ſhould weigh well what they did, and not raſhly attempt what they might after too late repent. But though as yet I verily thought that Excommunication had been a thing commanded in the Scriptures, yet I did not find it commanded after that manner that they propoſed: So that ſince Chriſt ſeemed* to me *to have left us at large for the manner of it, I ſet my thoughts on work what might be the beſt way and courſe under our circumſtances, and would be attended with the leaſt Diſtractions* and Inconveniencies; *which I did with the cloſer application and diligence, upon ſome Reflections that I had, how fatal and turbulent to Chriſtianity this had formerly proved, and was ſtill little better,* as it was managed.

Whilſt I was upon theſe thoughts, and look'd a little back upon what the Antients had writ on this ſubject, I find it weaker in all points than I had before ſuſpected; ſo that I could not but begin to doubt of the very thing. *My next reſort was to the School-men, among whom I met with as little ſatisfaction. Then came I to our Modern* Writers, *who no whit mended the matter; nay, I obſerv'd that they did moſt manifeſtly differ among themſelves in ſome things, which quicken'd my diligence in the Enquiry.*

So

So I laid by theſe Commentators a while, *and betook my my ſelf to the Scripture; in the peruſal of which, I mark'd and noted, with all the exactneſs I could, what was diſcrepant from, and what agreeable unto, the* commonly *received Opinion. And truly it was no ordinary aſſiſtance to me in this matter, to take a ſurvey with my ſelf of the ſtate of the Jewiſh Church and Government: for thus thought I with my ſelf, God in the 4th Chapter of* Deut. v. 6, 7, 8. *bears witneſs to their Laws, that there was no Nation that had Statutes and Judgments ſo righteous, and that for their Laws ſake it ſhould be ſaid of them, Surely this great Nation is a wiſe and underſtanding People: Therefore it ſeem'd neceſſary with me, that to have a Church gloriouſly and wiſely model'd, it muſt make near approaches to the Judaical Form. But certain it is, that in this Jewiſh Church things were never ſo inſtituted by God, as that there ſhould be diſtinct procedures in the puniſhing Immoralities, one by the Civil, and another by the Eccleſiaſtical power: What hinders then, but that even now too, that that Church which God hath bleſſed with a Chriſtian Magiſtracy, may ſit down contented under one form of Government?*

I then communicated my thoughts to learned, good, and pious men, ſo far, as that I preſs'd them not to conſider the matter ſlightly and curſorily: for I could not but deem it very unneceſſary that there ſhould be two Heads of the Viſible Church, where the Body is but one; and that their Mandates, Injunctions, Decretals, and all the Acts of a governing Authority, ſhould be diſtinct (as hitherto they have been) ſo that the Government of one ſhould not be ſubject to the Inſpection or Controul *of the other, but both their Juriſdictions be Chief in their kinds: For ſuch a Church-Senate or* Convocation of ſelect *Elders would they in truth have fram'd, that they ſhould have the Supreme Right* and Power *of puniſhing Vice even in the Magiſtrates themſelves, but not with corporal puniſhments, but*

by

by prohibiting them the Sacrament, first privately; and if on this they reform'd not, then in a more solemn and publick manner. But my Opinion was (as I always told them) That one Supreme Magistrate of Gods institution, and of the true Faith, *might,* and had as good right, *now, to restrain Vice, as heretofore* under the Law: *And I took me an instance from* Solomon's *glorious Reign, which was a kind of Type of the Christian Church's reigning upon Earth. Now neither under him, nor yet under* Moses, *the Judges, or any other the Kings, or when govern'd by the Optimacy, have we any foot-steps of two so distinct Judicatures* over mens actions and manners. *Nature (says* Musculus) *allows not two absolute and Independent Governments (without any subordinacy of one to the other) to Lord it over the same people. I must confess I received great Aids and Improvement of these my Thoughts from the persons with whom I conferr'd them: for in some things their Observations out-went my own; and where they did not, they furnisht me many material hints to mend them by: But still I kept my self quiet from any publick Contests in this Affair, and entered not into any Debates about it where I was not provok'd, and then too I used the utmost moderation in the managing them; esteeming it as disadvantageous as needless to trouble our Churches with this Dispute, when it did not yet appear that any body had imposed such a Form of Discipline upon them. But others who think* the relish of *Government more sweet and pleasant than* that of *Obedience, could not so temper their* mouths, *but by all the Arts and Insinuations that they thought might work our most pious Prince to their designes, they labour'd (as I afterwards understood) to introduce something very like this into our Churches; and had not other rubs thwarted them, God knows how far they might have prevailed. Besides, how did they lie at me all this while? what Dirt did they throw upon me, onely for that*

they

they knew how averse I was to their purposes, and that I should not be wanting, according to my best endeavours, to frustrate them? But this I need not here enlarge upon.

It happened about the same time, that an English man (who was then said to have left his Country because he could not brook a Surplice and such-like Formalities then enjoyn'd) *desiring to commence Doctor, proposed* in his Theses, *Disputes concerning indifferent matters and* religious *habits. Now* our *Divines would not admit of this man* to his Doctorship, *for fear of giving distaste to the English* Clergy (*though in the latter of his Theses something was proposed too relating to this matter*); *but it seems they thought the peace and tranquillity of our own Church, a trifle not worth the regarding. And therefore amongst his other Theses this was one, That in every Church that was rightly instituted, there ought to be a Government* or Discipline *observed, whereby the Ministry, in conjunction with Elders for that purpose to be elected, should have right* and authority *to excommunicate any vitious Liver, even Princes themselves. Now though I was not without apprehensions that this Dispute was not then taken up for nothing, yet I hoped withal that no more would come of it than of an ordinary Disputation, where the Question is agitated Pro and Con, not for deciding the matter so much, as to whet and exercise the young Disputants, and to try how well qualified they are for the Degrees that they stand Candidates for. I therefore stirr'd not thither; and indeed other affairs hindered my being present. And for others, who I saw ready to take up the Cudgels, I advised them to have a greater regard to the Churches* Tranquillity, *than to the Follies of a few; yet some disputed the point with them: But it might have prov'd no more than a Disputation of course, had they not called as well them as me, Prophane, Satanical, Devilish Makebates, Enemies to Religion and Holiness, Fanaticks, and what not?*

Truly,

Truly for my ſelf, I can religiouſly ſay, it never entr'd into my thoughts to ſet Pen to Paper in this matter, till I both heard and ſaw with what intemperateneſs they comported themſelves both publickly and privately; ſo that I thought a longer ſilence but a betraying the Truth. But as I was then more than ordinarily employed (by reaſon of the ſick Souldiers who return'd from France *with* Calimire, *in the year* 1568.) *I ſet down my Thoughts but brokenly, as in the intervals of my Employ, things from time to time occurr'd to my mind; which, when I had amaſſed a pretty deal (though confuſedly and immethodically) together, I diſtributed and ſubmitted them to the Cenſure of others, intreating them withal, that if they obſerv'd any thing falſe, or but weakly maintain'd, they would anſwer the one, and ſtrengthen the other with better Reaſons. And I hop'd to gain this (if nothing elſe) thereby, that thoſe of contrary Sentiments would become more calm and moderate upon the peruſal of what I had writ, and not differ from us farther than they had Arguments to bear them out. One of the two perſons (with whom I thought of conferring moſt particularly) ſaw and read three parts of four before the whole was tranſcribed; and being then askt what was his Judgment of it, he promiſed to give it when he ſhould have peruſed the whole. But ſomething, I know not what, he ſaid by the by of Leaven, and that he thought the Conſent of the antient Church was to be very much eſteem'd of; and, in fine, ſome other things did he let fall: whereby 'twas eaſie for me to make a Judgment of his Opinion in the caſe. And I learnt quickly after, that the very ſame perſon had writ a Tract about Excommunication, in maintenance of the Vulgar Opinion; which made me no longer doubt what anſwer I ſhould meet with from him: for I knew him to be one who was not eaſily brought to retract what he had once aſſerted. Therefore ſince I had in the latter part of my Book confuted all his Objections, I preſented it whole to another*

another person, who I thought the best Friend I had in the world: He not onely took the Book from me with disdain and contempt (whether he had an item of it before, I know not) but he plainly said he should not vouchsafe it a reading; yet I left it with him for some days, and besought him with all the earnestness and entreaties that I could, that he would but look it over and give me his Judgment upon it. But I understood upon good grounds that my Solicitations had been fruitless. I sent for my Book about twelve days after, that I might get others Opinions upon it. But because 'twas long, and could not be so soon read over by many persons, I contracted it into certain Theses or Positions, that I might the better communicate it into many hands; so that hereby I quickly got the Opinion of the most eminent German Divines; and others who had refused the reading of it at my request, were at last thus drawn into it unawares.

But that it might appear to the World that I sought after nothing but the naked Truth, I prefix'd a Preface to it, wherein I requested two things: First, That all men would be pleased diligently to examine every point, and weigh it by the Scale of Holy Writ; and if they saw me in an Errour, would endeavour to set me right again, that I might be contributory to setting others to right: I promised from the bottom of my heart (God, the Searcher of hearts, is my Witness) that I would thank him both before God and man, whoever should shew me my Errour. And (because I foresaw what after came to pass) my second Request was, That if they found fault with any thing, that they would so do it, that I might have a just liberty of explaining my self, and of justly defending any thing they should undeservedly condemn: for though I had approv'd my self a Friend to them in all good turns, I could scarcely expect like measure again, by what I had before experienced. Nor was I deceived: for the very men whom I had so fondly conceived

ved to have been my beſt Friends, turn'd ſuddenly my Enemies, and would not ſo much as ſpeak to me, though I had never through all my life injur'd them in Word or Deed, but always did and ſtill will ſtudy to oblige them: but however, I thank God that I experienced their Conſtancy and good Will to me, rather in a concern of this, than of any other nature. But reſtleſs were they; and ſince they had vainly attempted by the help of the Magiſtrate to call in theſe Theſes out of the hands where they had been diſpers'd, they go another way to work, and deſir'd (under the pretext of Laws which were never yet heard of) that as Divines were not to meddle with the Opinions and Rights of other Profeſſions, *that it might be enacted and enjoyn'd, That all of other Profeſſions might be reſtrained from entering into their Divinity-Schools. Had this been ask'd threeſcore years ago, it might have paſs'd well enough; but how 'twould go down now, let others judge. Are the Precepts, to ſearch the Scriptures,* Joh. 5. 39. *and* 1 Joh. 4. 1. Try the ſpirits whether they are of God; *and* 1 Theſſ. 5. 21. Prove all things; hold faſt that which is good, *and the like, Precepts which were given to none but thoſe who teach Divinity for Hire? I had thought that Chriſtian Divinity had been a Doctrine common to all men, and was therefore to be taught every where. But what is it they ask, when they would have us keep from their Schools?* Do they mean *as they concern not themſelves in any other Faculties? Sure they would not have us not to hear their Lectures, or that we ſhould not come thither to learn? Who, I pray, ever forbid them to ſtudy the Languages, Philoſophy, Phyſick, or Law? But if they care not for, or neglect thoſe Studies, muſt we do ſo by Divinity? Did indeed the ignorance of the Scriptures carry no worſe conſequence with it, than their ignorance in the other Studies, we might peradventure complement them upon that point; or they might eaſily prevail, if no body muſt ſpeak againſt what*

they

they enact and determine. This was a thing that the Romaniſts indeed, and by a better Right than they, laid claim to; but I cannot gratifie either of them herein, ſince Chriſt my Saviour has countermanded me.

Now that, they ſay, it becomes me not to meddle with matters of Divinity, I value it not; or that I have not a juſt regard to my Reputation (as they ſuggeſt) perhaps becauſe I make not a Gain, or am not hired to ſtudy the Truth: for were I paid for my Teaching of Divinity, I ſhould do nothing (as themſelves hold) unſuitable to my Duty and Function. But in truth I deſire nothing but to have the Truth underſtood, and God's Name glorified, and my ſelf expoſed to ſhame, rather than the Truth be kept under deck: for Chriſt hath not without cauſe ſaid it, Joh. 5. 44. *That they cannot believe, who receive Honour one of another, and ſeek not the Honour that* cometh *from God onely.*

Therefore when this too fell not out to their minds, and yet they could no longer ſmother their Animoſities, they began to aſſail me with dint of Argument; which upon all occaſions they urged not without the ſevereſt Reflections upon me. *Now though I heard thereof from ſeveral hands, yet, for Quietneſs and Peace ſake, I eaſily deſpis'd it, hoping to ſee the day that when thoſe firſt Emotions ſhould be over, and their Paſſions cool, they might ſtand more fair and equally affected to me. But alas, I was no Prophet here neither; for, for almoſt five months after, their Hatred run as high as ever: nor did they give over baiting me and my Writing, partly with Clamour and Reproach, and partly with I know not what Sophiſtical Reaſonings. Therefore taking a ſtricter review of my Theſes, which made an hundred before, I contracted them to Seventy five, and marſhall'd them in a little better order: Some things in them I explained more clearly, and enforc'd them more ſtrongly. And in fine, I have made it my buſineſs to give as full ſatisfaction to all Lovers of Truth, as I could in ſo little a Treatiſe.*

Adver-

Advertiſement to the Reader.

THis Tract received never (that I heard of) more than one direct Anſwer, and that writ by Theodore Beza, *in the year* 1590, *on the behalf of the* Geneva *Plat-form, or Presbyterian way of Excommunicating; which put our Author upon a farther Reply in Confirmation of the following Theſes, (which remains yet unanſwered, and unanſwerable, for ought I know): but that Reply being above four times as long as* THIS *that is here publiſhed; and the main of the Arguments that he goes upon being hinted here, though not ſo fully preſs'd, the Publication of the other is at preſent forborn.*

A QUESTION OF THE Weightieſt Moment, cleared:

Whether Excommunication (ſo far as it debars thoſe who underſtand and make profeſſion of the Chriſtian *Religion from the uſe of the Sacrament, by reaſon of ſome ſin committed) be of Divine Inſtitution, or the Invention of Men?*

POSITION I.

THE name of Excommunication ſeems to be derived from 1 *Cor.* cap. 10. and imports an amotion *or ſeparation* from the Communion; which there, *verſ.* 16. is called the *Communion of the Bloud of Chriſt*: And in truth, Excommunication is now defined by almoſt every body, to be an Excluſion from the ſociety and communion of the Faithful.

II. Now the company of the Faithful is twofold; *the one*, Internal and Spiritual; *the other*, External or Viſible, and Political *or Civil*. (*For*, for that third ſort which *our* Modern Papiſts have invented, 'tis neither *of it ſelf* a well-fram'd one, nor pertinent to *our* preſent purpoſe.)

III. Now betwixt both theſe, the difference is *at leaſt* ſo great, that there is no neceſſity that either ſhould be comprehenſive of each other: for as he may ſtill remain a Member of Chriſt, who without any juſt cauſe is caſt out of the viſible Church, or is *otherwiſe* conſtrain'd to take Covert, and make his abode among Infidels; ſo they that paſs muſter amidſt the viſible Flock, are not all the Living Members of Chriſt. Hence does it follow, that thoſe things may *well* be different which unite us to one and not to the other, and ſeparate us from the one, and yet not from the other.

IV. And indeed we are made the Members of Chriſt, that is, are joyned to the Internal and Spiritual Fellowſhip of Chriſt, and of the Faithful, by *that* Faith alone which worketh by Charity: and *'tis* by Infidelity onely *that* we fall from this *Conſortſhip*. And therefore no body can give *us* admiſſion into this Society, or ſhut the doors upon us, but he that can impart to us a lively Faith, and again withdraw it *at his pleaſure*.

V. Now 'tis by the Profeſſion of the ſame Faith, by the Approbation of the ſame Doctrine, and in fine, by the *promiſcuous* uſage of the ſame Sacraments, that we become Conſorts and *Fellow-members* of the External and Viſible Church. He that has theſe three in him, ſo long as he remains ſuch, is reckon'd for a Member of the Outward Congregation of the Faithful, albeit he arrives not at the *further pitch* of Internal Fellowſhip of the Soul and Spirit.

VI. He therefore that is thruſt out from External Communion with the Church (that is, that is excommunicated) is debarr'd all three, or two, or but one of them: But *now* from the two firſt, to wit, the Confeſſion of Faith, and Aſſent to the Chriſtian Doctrine (under which *latter* I would include hearing of the Word and Doctrine) no one ought to be prohibited; but rather *on*

the

the other hand, the whole World are to be invited, and by all the Allurements and Arts *of men, won and brought* into theſe. There is nothing left then, but that he who is excommunicated, muſt and can (of all the forementioned three) be onely prohibited from the participation of the Sacraments: But whether the debarring of all private Commerce be an unſeparable appurtenant of this, or the one may be without the other, will be an after-conſideration. Thus much is certain, that no other puniſhment hath any thing to do with this Excommunication, as to the ſubſtance of it: for *as for other Penalties*, they may *as well* be inflicted on ſuch as ſtand not excommunicate, as they may not be inflicted on ſuch as ſtand ſo.

VII. Therefore the Papal *Faction*, over and beſides this Excommunication (which they call the leſſer, and rightly define it by a bare Excluſion from the Sacraments) do very improperly to adde any ſecond, which they call the greater, and anathema; and define it againſt expreſs Scripture, by interdiction *and ſeclusion* from Temples, from *all* private Commerce and Converſation, and from all lawful Tranſaction *betwixt man and man*: for the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 14. 23. plainly ſhews, that neither Heathens nor any others were precluded from hearing or reading the Word of God, or from the Thankſgivings or Prayers of Chriſtians.

VIII. From what has been ſaid, Excommunication is apparently nothing but a publick and ſolemn Interdiction, as was ſaid before, *or Excluſion from* the Sacraments, and more particularly the Lords Supper (which the Apoſtle calls peculiarly κοινωνία, Communion) to the end that the Sinners may repent, and be again readmitted to receive the Sacraments.

IX. Here now the Queſtion ariſes, *viz.* Whether any perſon be to be prohibited or debarred the uſe and freedom of the Sacraments, upon the account of any *previous*

ſin acted *by him*, or for the wickedneſs of his life, if he himſelf deſires to take the Sacraments with other Chriſtians? This Queſtion is meant, of ſuch who profeſs the ſame *Chriſtian* Faith, is ingrafted into the Church by Baptiſm, and differs not from her in Doctrinals, (as we ſaid, *Sect.* 5.) but fails in *point* of Morality and a good Life *onely*. The Queſtion is therefore this: Whether there be any ſootſteps in Holy Writ, of either Precept or Example, whereby ſuch perſons are either commanded or taught to be debarr'd *acceſs to* the Sacraments?

X. Our Anſwer is in the Negative, That there is no ſuch; and that rather there are both Examples and Precepts too, more than once to be met with in the Bible, of a quite contrary nature: for we have it from *Moſes*, *Exod.* 23. *v.* 14. and 34. *v.* 23. *Num.* 9. *Deut.* 16. *v.* 16. that every Male that was circumciſed was to appear before God thrice in the year; that is, in the Feaſt of Unleavened Bread, in the Feaſt of Weeks, and in the Feaſt of Tabernacles: And the Law commanded ſtrangers too, *Deut.* 9. *v.* 14. (provided they were circumciſed) to celebrate the Paſſover with the Jews. The unclean alſo, *Deut.* 16. *v.* 10. & 13. and thoſe that ſhould be in a Journey afar off, were commanded to eat the Paſſover the ſame day of the ſecond month, and in the ſame manner with the Jews. Nay, 'tis farther added, *v.* 13. that the man that is clean, and is not in a Journey, and forbeareth to keep the Paſſover, even the ſame Soul ſhall be cut off from his People. 'Twas therefore the Will and Command of God, that all the circumciſed ſhould celebrate it; and God excluded none from this Sacrament, (nor indeed from any other Rites, Ceremonies, or Sacrifices) except the Unclean.

XI. In *Leviticus* ſeveral kinds of Sacrifices are enjoyned, according to the difference of the ſins which the Criminal was thereby to expiate; whether they were ſins of ignorance and errour, or voluntarily and knowingly committed.

mitted. In like manner doth God, *Deut.* 14. *v.* 23. give a general Command to all, (there's no exception there of ſinners) *That they ſhould eat the Tythe of their Corn*, &c. *before the Lord in the place which he ſhould chuſe, that ſo they might learn to fear the Lord their God always.* Sacraments therefore were *to them* Allurements to Piety; and for that reaſon was no body thruſt from them, but rather was every individual man invited to frequent them.

XII. In very truth, we do not at all read that any one among the Jews was either by *their* Prieſts, Levites, Prophets, Scribes, or Phariſees, prohibited acceſs to *their* Sacrifices, Ceremonies, and Sacraments. The Chief Prieſts and Phariſees counted Chriſt and his Apoſtles bad men enough, but we never find that they attempted to thruſt them from their Sacrifices or Sacraments either before or after Chriſts death; nay, they did not drive out of their Temple, or from their Ceremonies, ſo much as a Publican that was a Jew, or any other circumciſed *Proſelyte*, though a bad liver: for they were not to learn, that this was more than the Law of *Moſes* allowed them to do. Indeed, in *Mat.* 9. *v.* 11. they reproved Chriſt for eating and drinking with Publicans and Sinners; but at no time or place did they twit him for praying with them in the Temple, for his frequenting their Sacrifices and *other* Rites, for his yearly Progreſs with them and others *of the Rabble* to *Jeruſalem* to celebrate the Paſſover and other Solemnities: And ſo far were they from any endeavours to put the moſt cruel Villains, and moſt wicked Hereticks, the Sadducees, from their Ceremonies *and Communion in Worſhip*, that they even permitted them to climb to the Dignity of Chief Prieſts: And yet 'tis moſt apparent out of *Joſephus* and the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, what an *inveterate* hatred they had for one another. Had it therefore been lawful, they would with open arms have embraced ſuch an occaſion of revenging themſelves on their Enemies.

XIII. But

XIII. But farther yet, it was not in their power to keep them from eating the Paſſover: for that was not eaten before the Prieſts, but in their private houſes, as we read Chriſt to have celebrated his laſt Paſſover with his Diſciples. Every man was then a Prieſt as 'twere, as *Philo Judæus* bears witneſs, when ſpeaking of the Paſſover, he tells, That on that Feſtival every man throughout the Nation ſacrificed *for himſelf*, not expecting *nor tarrying for* their Prieſts: for the Law indulg'd the *priviledge* of Prieſthood to the whole Nation, that on one ſet day every year they ſhould ſacrifice with their own hands. And *Exod.* 12. *v.* 4. 'twas commanded, *That if the Houſhold were too little for the Lamb, that then he and his Neighbor next unto the houſe ſhould take it according to the number of the Souls*, to the end that the whole might be eaten. The like ſeems to have been obſerved in *the matter of* Circumciſion, (excepting in this particular, that they were not obliged to circumcile at *Jeruſalem* onely, as they were to celebrate there the Paſſover:) for I do not remember that the preſence of the Prieſt was requiſite to Circumciſion.

XIV. *John* the Baptiſt too, who was the forerunner of Chriſt, did conſtantly do the ſame: for he baptized not onely the Phariſees and Sadduces that came unto him (whoſe behaviour and manners he very well underſtood, when he publickly called them a Generation of Vipers) but alſo the Publicans, and all others *that reſorted to him to be baptized*, to the intent that they repenting them of their former evil life, might ſet about the amending it, and ſo might flee from the Wrath to come. 'Tis ſcarce probable, that ſuch a man as *John* was, ſhould admit of men of ſuch profligate lives, men that impiouſly, *audaciouſly*, and publickly denied the Reſurrection of the Dead, had he not known that the Law forbad not acceſs to ſuch: for the *Judaical* Law (as has been already ſhewn) prohibited

ted no circumciſed perſons, but the unclean and leprous.

XV. Beſides, this Uncleanneſs was a Legal Ceremony, not *any* impurity of Life, or *pravity* of Manners: for not he who had ſinned, or committed any wickedneſs, was *thereby* unclean; but the Unclean were thoſe who touched any dead Corpſe, any Excrements, any perſon that had an Iſſue of Bloud, or the like. And 'twas for this cauſe that the Phariſees would not go into the Judgment-hall, when they had delivered up Chriſt to *Pilate* to be put to death, leſt they ſhould be debarred *thereby* from eating the Paſſover. But ſurely the Moſaical uncleanneſs did not ſo typifie *and repreſent* our iniquities, that as they who were thereby defiled were ſhut out from the Tabernacle, and the company of others: ſo ſhould it ſignifie that theſe ſins were to be corrected and puniſht by with-holding the Sacraments, and by Excluſion from the Viſible Church; as appears plainly by what follows: For,

1. Even whilſt Legal Uncleanneſs was in force, and there were then wicked men in abundance, yet were not the ſame puniſhments appointed for the wicked and for the unclean. What probability is there then that theſe Ceremonies ſhould *typifie their puniſhment, or in any ſort* ſignifie that *Moral Delinquencies* ſhould be thus checkt and *redreſs'd*, when the Ceremonies themſelves ſhould be taken away and cancel'd?

2. *Moſes* had plainly been inconſiſtent with himſelf, had he in fact admitted them to the Temple and Rituals, whom *at the ſame time* he by thoſe Ceremonies ſignified that they were to be excluded. For certain it is, that no one was ever thruſt out of the Tabernacle, or from the Congregation, for the pravity of his Manners, if, as the Law commanded, he had neither touched any dead Body, nor otherwiſe in that nature defiled himſelf. At this rate therefore *Moſes* ſhould puniſh thoſe

that

that were but figuratively unclean, and let ſuch as were unclean in reality go unregarded; (I mean, as to this *ſort of* puniſhment.)

3. That Legal Impurity affected and tainted the Body alone; whereas wickedneſs conſiſts in the *Internal* actions and operations *of the mind*: for the cauſe and root of *all* Evil is born with us, and falls not under mans correction, whilſt it puts not forth its fruit; for otherwiſe muſt the whole World be Excommunicate: for we ſhall not get theſe ſpots out of our Soul, whilſt we breathe mortal air. But that other Impurity, which is but a bodily ſtain, is puniſh'd by being debarr'd Commerce with others, though there be no other fruit, *no farther evil* ſpringing from that uncleanneſs, nor he that is defil'd hath done nothing againſt the Law: *but* for the actions and tranſgreſſions of the unclean, they were dealt with at the rate of others tranſgreſſions, if the parties under that defilement did any thing againſt the Law; *and the cleanneſs or uncleanneſs of the ſinner neither aggravated nor leſſened the moral guilt.*

4. Our *very* Adverſaries confeſs, that not all ſorts and ſizes of ſins are to be redreſſed by Excommunication; whereas the Law commands that every uncleanneſs be puniſht by Excluſion from the Tabernacle and publick Sacrifices: ſo that thoſe could not typifie all ſorts of Iniquities.

5. No man that ſins unwittingly can be excommunicated; but 'twas uſual for men unwittingly to contract uncleanneſs, *and not onely* without any blame of theirs, but to their great grief *and trouble*. What fault was there in him, who ſleeping, unvoluntarily ſuffered nocturnal Pollutions? and where the Wife might unexpectedly fall into that condition which the Law made a Pollution to the Huſband, if he approach'd her? or by the deceaſe of Children, Wife, or Parents? or the like, which uſually happened? And now it needs not to be proved that they

they are onely voluntary *and ſpontaneous* Crimes, for which perſons may be (as ſome men think) debarr'd Acceſs to the Sacraments.

6. A far ſeverer puniſhment was ordained for him that killed a man againſt and without any will *or intention of ſo doing*, than a *naked* ſecluſion from the Sacraments for ſome few weeks or days: If therefore an *unpremeditated* and involuntary offence, and by conſequence a ſin of the leſſer die, underwent a more ſharp and bitter chaſtizement than the fouleſt Legal Impurities, 'tis plain that the puniſhments for them are not intended to repreſent the puniſhment for *Moral* Iniquities.

7. It often fell out, that men of the greateſt Sanctity and Integrity became unclean, and were debarr'd both from entering into the Temple, and from the uſe of Sacrifices; whilſt on the other hand, men moſt notoriouſly wicked had admiſſion to either, without controul: whereas if in the Church of God both ought to undergo the ſame puniſhment, the latter ſhould rather be ſecluded than the former.

8. 'Tis manifeſt that God did at no time or place abſolutely prohibit all Legal Impurity: for ſome were to attend the dying perſons, ſome thoſe that were infected with an unclean diſeaſe, ſome muſt bury the dead, and in fine, ſome muſt purifie the unclean, (by which means they themſelves became defiled, *v. Numb.* 19.) ſo that God would not that all Legal Impurities ſhould be avoided: But God prohibited ſins of all *kinds*, and to all men, and at all times, and never indulg'd the perpetrating any wicked action at any time or place whatever.

9. God commands that ſin ſhould be reſtrain'd by Fire, Sword, Halters, Stoning, Stripes, Mulcts, Impriſonment, and other penalties of the like nature; but ordains that the legally unclean ſhould be purified by ſprinkling and waſhing with water, and the like, *Numb* 19. *v.* 17, 18, 19.

10. He that had contracted uncleanneſs according to the definitions of legal *Pollutions*, and died in that ſtate, as *for inſtance*, women in their menſtruouſneſs, or men having a Gonorrhea or Leproſie on them, were not for that inroll'd among the wicked, or doom'd to damnation: But he that ſhall ſo live, that honeſt good men ſhall deem him worthy of Excommunication, cannot be accounted of otherwiſe than as a ſinful and impious perſon.

11. Legal Uncleanneſſes took place *and were regarded* but with one ſingle People, and *there too* but for a limited time; whereas ſins ſprang up every where, among all Nations, without diſtinction of place or time. Since then, as well among all other Nations, as among the Jews *themſelves*, before Legal Impurities were introduced, ſins were both when puniſhed and in the puniſhing adjudged *ſins*, it certainly ſignified ſomething more than the puniſhment of flagitious men; *which was* ſurely lighter than what was to make ſatisfaction to the Will of God.

12. Every perſon was purified at ſet-times and places, *and* by uſing ſet *and peculiar* Ceremonies, be the party how he would as to his mind; that is, whether he become unclean with or againſt his Will: but none *ſtand* acquitted from their ſins, but ſuch as heartily repent, and do with as much ſincerity as earneſtneſs deſire to grow and be better.

13. Every one was his own judge of his being cleanſed (excepting the leprous, and ſome few others) and ſtood not in need of Judges or Elders, who ſhould judge for them, and pronounce them clean or unclean. Our Oppoſers have otherguess Sentiments of the excommunicated: for they put the Deciſion upon the judgment of their Elders, not upon the Aſſertion of the Parties who ſay they repent.

14. The Leper, *Lev.* 13. *v.* 12, 13. whoſe Leproſie ſpread from the crown of the head to the ſoal of the feet,

ſo

ſo that *the Leproſie cover all his fleſh*, and that the ſkin of the whole body be all over of a colour, was to be pronounced whole and clean; but he who on the contrary had his ſkin *raw and defiled* but in ſome one or more parts, was *to be* accounted unclean. *Now* in the caſe of ſinners, 'tis quite otherwiſe: for he that wallows over head and ears in ſin (like a Sow all bemir'd) is not an honeſter man than he who retains ſome ſhadow of Religion, and *ſhew* of Honeſty.

15. The Lepers are not commanded to do any thing on their part towards their cleanſing, but barely to ſhew themſelves to the Prieſt, that he may pronounce *the Plague* clean or not clean: But to wicked men the Command is direct, that *themſelves* amend their lives, and give evidence of a ſorrowful *and penitent* heart by their good and holy works.

16. Many were made unclean by touching the very things whereby others were made clean, and while themſelves did purifie others, *v. Numb.* 19. but ſure no man deſerves to be excommunicated from the means he uſes in the healing and purifying others who are defiled with ſin and iniquity: Whereas if you would have the figure to anſwer *herein*, you muſt grant that all that would recal others into the *ways of Righteouſneſs* by Excommunication, are to be excommunicated themſelves.

17. The unclean were not by the Law interdicted all Sacraments: for they were to obſerve all the private Rites *and Ceremonies* of their Country; *they were* to keep the Sabbath, and celebrate the Feaſt of Purification, whereby the fruits and benefits of Chriſts *meritorious* works were chiefly *ſhadowed or* expreſſed; and all this at the peril of their lives, *vid. Lev.* 16. and 23. for they were not (as I ſaid before) taken for men damn'd, and of a deſperate condition: But whether in the opinion of our Adverſaries the Excommunicate are to be thought otherwiſe, 'tis needleſs for me to attempt much the proving it.

 18. The

18. The unclean under the Law did propagate an uncleanneſs to the cloaths, houſes, places, and perſons that they *touched*, *or* had *otherwiſe* to do with; but wicked men did neither defile the Temple nor any thing elſe, nor indeed any other men, unleſs thoſe others joyn'd with them in the ſin. The Temple was not polluted by bringing in an Adultereſs, *Numb.* 5. *v.* 19. *John* 8. *v.* 11. no more did the Publican (who in the Parable, *Luke* 18. *v.* 9. went up with the Phariſee into the Temple to pray) defile it by his preſence; that Phariſee who thought him a mighty ſinner, compar'd with himſelf, yet never thought himſelf defiled *by his company*. When *Judas* threw down the Traiterous Pieces, *the Price of Bloud*, in the Temple, we do not read that the Temple was thereby polluted, or that the Phariſees made any complaint, as to that, who yet would not go *into the Judgment-hall*, *leſt they ſhould be defiled*, *John* 18. *v.* 28. Whereas were but a woman in her Menſtruouſneſs, or having an Iſſue of Bloud, or any one who had buried another, or had (though unawares) touched a dead body, been ſeen in the Temple, all had been polluted *and unclean*; nor might they have ſacrificed, or perform'd any other Worſhip, till 'twere again purified. In like manner *Judas* polluted not that laſt *Paſchal*-Supper by his deteſtable acts; which yet would have been the caſe, had but he or any other of the Diſciples touch'd any dead body.

In fine, the uncleanneſs under the Law, did figure our perverted and corrupt Nature, which could not be admitted into Heaven, unleſs waſhed and purified in and by the moſt pure *and precious* Bloud of Chriſt: for as the Tabernacle typified Heaven, and the caſting out thence *ſignified* Damnation, or the Excluſion from the heavenly *Jeruſalem*; ſo the cleanſing *or waſhings* by ordinary or ſanctified Water, prefigured *that* Purification by the death of Chriſt. 'Twas not therefore *typical*, or figurative of the

the quality of the Actions, but of the quality or pravity of our Nature. Nor did *Gods Law* prefigure how Vice ſhould be *bridled and* reſtrained; (for *Moſes* taught this in clear and expreſs words) but what ſhould be our State in another life, to wit, in the Kingdom of Heaven, which the Land of *Canaan* did ſhadow *to them:* All which plainly enough appears in *Rev.* 21. *v.*27. St. *Auguſtin* writing againſt the Donatiſts, was of opinion that it ſignified the Excluſion of Hereticks: But, *be it how 'twill*, even a blind man may ſee, from the many and great differences between the *Legal and Moral* Impurities, that the former could not be figurative of the latter, as our Adverſaries contend.

XVI. Though *Moſes* makes none but the forementioned Exception, yet ſhall I anſwer to an Objection, which may be collected out of his words: for peradventure ſome one may thus argue, The Jews are by *Moſes* commanded to eat the Paſſover without Leaven; which *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 5. *v.* 8, interprets the filthineſs of the fleſh, *that is*, *Moral wickedneſs:* It may therefore ſeem to ſome a very agreeable *and likely* matter, that the Lords Supper which ſucceeded to the Paſſover, ſhould be celebrated by ſhutting out *malicious and* wicked men.

XVII. I anſwer, *firſt*, That it carries little of probability with it, that God ſhould command a thing in expreſs terms, and again at the ſame time figuratively prohibit the ſelf-ſame thing. God plainly *and expreſly*, and with reiterated Precepts, commands that every Male (except the unclean, and ſuch as were in a Journey) ſhould keep the Paſſover: He never therefore intended to frighten away ſome under the figure of the Leaven. There were then plenty enough of bad men preſent, that it muſt be needleſs to typifie *and ſhadow* them *out* by Leaven: And the *wickedneſs of* men was *a thing* as obvious to mens ſenſes, *and as much to be taken notice of*, as the Leaven *that*

ſhould

ſhould repreſent it. Therefore ſince no figures are *commonly* inſtituted of ſuch things as are at hand and in view, and which with equal *clearneſs* ſtrike the Senſes, 'tis in vain to ſeek for any Figure there: How much more where the things figured are more notorious and common, than the Figures themſelves? But beſides, *Moſes* does not command, that the Eater of Leaven ſhould be debarr'd eating the Paſſover; but commands him to be ſlain: Therefore ſinners ſhould not ſo much be kept from the *Lords* Supper, as they ſhould be capitally puniſhed. Which is a Conſequence I ſhould be ſo far from admitting with difficulty, that I *rather* wiſh it might ſo be: for I deſire nothing more, than that the ſtricteſt Moral Diſcipline might be obſerv'd in the Church; but ſuch *ſtill* as is of Gods appointment, not of mans invention.

Secondly, The Jews might eat Leaven all the year round, excepting onely thoſe ſeven days of Unleavened Bread; (which they did commence from the eating of the Paſſover.) Now if you would parallel this with the Lords Supper, you muſt of neceſſity grant a liberty for licentious living all the year, provided you abſtained from vice all the time you were celebrating the Lords Supper.

Thirdly, *Moſes* ſpeaks here of the Paſſover onely, not of any other Sacraments; *by Analogie* therefore wicked men ſhould onely be kept from the Lords Supper, not from Baptiſm.

Fourthly, The Apoſtle makes not the compariſon to run betwixt the Feaſt of the Jews and the Lords Supper, but *betwixt that and* our whole courſe of life; he ſays we are unleavened (as men that are waſhed in the Bloud of Chriſt, and purged from all Leaven) and therefore, ſays he, let us *keep the Feaſt, that is*, let us live not with the Leaven of Malice, but with the Unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth. There is a vaſt difference betwixt Leaven ſimply ſo called, and the Leaven of Malice or Wrath:

Wrath: There is none but knows that *in the ſecond ſence* 'tis taken figuratively; and School-men ſay, that an analogical or figurative ſence proves nothing. This is certain, whatever is meant by Leaven, Excommunication can never be maintain'd or juſtifi'd from it, againſt Gods precept.

XVIII. But ſome may object that *Paul* ſpeaks here of the Paſſover; but what, *I pray*, makes this to our buſineſs? as if this word Paſſover were put for the Lords Supper in the New Teſtament: Chriſt, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. is our Paſſover ſacrificed *or ſlain* for us; not his Supper. The meaning *of the words* is this: As the Jews, who onely began their Feaſt of Unleavened Bread with eating the Lamb, did eat Unleavened Bread all that week after; ſo ſhould you, who have begun to believe in Chriſt, and are purified and become unleavened through his Bloud, you ſhould lead a pure and unſpotted life all the reſt of the week, that is, all the days of your life.

XIX. Now that nothing of different nature is to be met with in the other Books of the Old Teſtament, may be known *and proved*, if it were but from this alone, that the *Jews* Poſterity were to live according to the Laws and Inſtitutions of *Moſes*; contrary to which they might not *by any means* inſtitute *or enjoyn* any thing which related to the Worſhip of God. Moſt certainly the *good and* pious Judges, Prieſts, Prophets, and Kings, forced away none from their Sacraments and Sacrifices, but rather invited all to them with the greater earneſtneſs *and zeal*. The ſtory of good King [it ſhould be *Hezekiah*, I ſuppoſe: See 2 *Chron.* 35.] *Joſiah*, 2 *Chron.* 35. *v.* 18. is well known, who called together all the Children of *Iſrael*, as well thoſe whom he knew to have ſacrificed and burnt Incenſe to ſtrange Gods or Devils, as thoſe who for the ſhortneſs *of the warning* could not be cleanſed, 2 *Chron.* 30. *v.* 19. *according to the purification of the Sanctuary*:

Sanctuary : From whence 'tis obſervable, that Sacraments are Provocations and Allurements to *Religion and* Piety; and that men grow better rather by frequenting, than by being robb'd of them, provided they are rightly and faithfully inſtructed.

XX. Excommunication therefore can never be maintain'd from the firſt Chapter of *Iſaiah*, v. 13. *Pſal.* 50. *v.* 8. and many places of like import; where 'tis ſaid, that God will have nothing to do with the Sacrifices and Oblations of the Wicked: for God doth in all thoſe places condemn the abuſe of them, in that they thought that they fully perform'd the Will of God by the *meer* external performance, at what rate ſoever their Soul ſtood affected. Beſides, God neither commands the Prophet, nor any one elſe by him, to exclude the Wicked from the Sacrifices and *Rites*; but ſhews that God will not hear them, unleſs that withal they amend their lives. Now the external Policy *and Government* of the Church ſtands upon a different foot with the Will of God to us-ward, as himſelf is the Approver or Condemner of our *thoughts and* actions. In fine, from the ſelf-ſame places it may directly and in the ſame manner be demonſtrated, that none that is a ſinner may call upon the Name of the Almighty; nay, that 'tis unlawful *for ſuch an one* ſo much as to praiſe or give thanks unto God: and then 'twill be incumbent on the Prieſts and Elders to forbid the Wicked all theſe; for God hath a like averſion to thoſe *when they come* from wicked men, as is plain as well from the Texts inſtanc'd in, as from places of the like import. And if this latter carries abſurdity in it, no leſs doth the former.

XXI. Neither doth that of 1 *Eſdras*, chap. 9. v. 3. 4. make any whit againſt us; for that was a matter of Policy, and no ways relating to the Sacraments: for the Magiſtracy (not *Eſdras* the Prieſt alone, though he too was a part of the Magiſtracy; for as *Joſephus* bears witneſs, though

though they had a Leader, yet were they govern'd by the Optimacy *or Nobility*) ſet forth a Proclamation, That whoſoever met not at *Jeruſalem* within two or three days, their Cattel ſhould be ſeized to the uſe of the Temple, and they be caſt out from them that were of the Captivity; not from their Sacraments and Sacrifices. But we make it not the enquiry of this place, whether the Magiſtrate hath a right of puniſhing ſo or ſo, but whether the Prieſts had any authority of removing diſſolute and bad Livers from the Sacrifices: *Eſdras* could not do this contrary to the Command of God. Adde to this, that *Moſes* never commanded this penalty (to wit, Excluſion from Sacraments) to be inflicted on them who married ſtrange women, *Deut.* 7. *v.* 3. And in the 8th Chap. of 1 *Eſdras*, 'tis ſhewn how he was to proceed againſt the Tranſgreſſors of the Law *in that point, to wit*, by Death, Baniſhment, Corporal Puniſhments, Confiſcation of Eſtates, Bonds or Impriſonments. But in fine, 'twas quite another thing to be thruſt out from the company of them who had returned from the Captivity, and to be ſhut out from the Temple and Sacrifices: for it appears from *Exod.* 12. 21. and *Numb.* 9. 2. that the ſtranger that was circumciſed, was admitted to keep the Paſſover, and then too, many of thoſe who either had continued in *Judea*, or who of the Inhabitants had forſaken the filthineſs *and abominations* of the Gentiles, and became Jewiſh Proſelytes, did together with all the others, celebrate the Paſſover, as 'tis written at the end of the 6th Chapter of *Eſdras*. Theſe, ſuch as they were, were not debarr'd the Sacrifices, Temple, or Ceremonious *Rites*, though they were not reckoned among the number of them who return'd from *Babylon*. In like manner did they remove ſome of the Prieſts from their Sacerdotal Function, becauſe they could not make out their Pedigree; as appears 1 *Eſdras* 2. And from all put together, 'tis plainly impoſſible that

Excommunication can be ſhor'd up or ſupported hereby.

XXII. There is yet one Objection left, which ſome men hug themſelves in, and prize mightily, and that is the caſting out of the Synagogues: for to aſſert Excommunication the more irrefragably, they quote you what is written in *John* 9. *v.* 22. and *ch.* 12. *v.* 42. and *ch.* 16. *v.* 2. But many and true are the Anſwers to this. The word Synagogue ſometimes ſignifies a place; as when Jeſus is ſaid to have entred into and taught in the Synagogue: Sometimes a Convention or Meeting, whether the ſame were in the Synagogue it ſelf, or elſewhere; as when the Phariſees are ſaid to chuſe the chief Seats in the Synagogues, and the uppermoſt Rooms at Feaſts, *Mark* 12. 39. *Luke* 20. 46. In this latter ſence (or *rather* in both of them) is it uſed, *Mat.* 10. *v.* 17. and *ch.* 23. *v.* 34. where Chriſt foretels the ſcourging of his Followers in the Synagogues; and *Mat.* 10. *v.* 17. *Mark* 13. *v.* 9. *Luke* 12. *v.* 11. and 21. *v.* 12. in which places the word ſignifies no more than the publick *place of* Judicature, as 'tis often uſed for the ſame by the Septuagint; as we ſhall have opportunity to clear hereafter. But in the laſt forecited places, *Mat.* 10. *v.* 17. and *Mark* 13. *v.* 9. συνέδρια and συναγωγὰς *which we tranſlate Councils and Synagogues*, are there put as if they both ſignified the ſame thing: In the other places, after συναγωγὰς preſently follows ἡγεμόνας καὶ βασιλεῖς, Kings and Rulers, as in *Luke* 21. *v.* 12. (inſtead of which the ſame Evangeliſt, *ch.* 12. *v.* 11. puts τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ ἐξουσίας, Magiſtrates and Powers:) So in *Mark* 13. *v.* 9. *Mat.* 10. *v.* 17. By comparing theſe places, 'tis moſt plainly demonſtrable, that the Evangeliſts, or *rather* Chriſt, did not (by the words συνέδρια and συναγωγὰς, Council and Synagogue) underſtand *or mean* any thing *more* than the Jewiſh Judicatures which were held before ſeveral perſons who ſate as Judges, though generally one had *the Chair, and* ſomething

of

of Superiority; or if more did act, they did it in the name of one of them. In these Assemblies or Synagogues those that were *found* adjudg'd guilty, were buffeted and beaten with Rods and the like, *Mat.*10.17. and 23.34. *Acts* 17.10. and 26.11. and 2 *Cor.*11.25. which place may be easily understood by *Deut.* 25. 2, 3. Now the casting out of this *kind of* Synagogue, was a kind of Political or Civil Ignominy or Punishment, and so a local banishment as 'twere, as we gather out of *Luke* 4. 28, 29. which can never be applied to Sacraments, which (except it be that of Circumcision, and some few others) were celebrated in the Temple (of which there was but one) and at *Jerusalem*: And of the same nature doth that punishment seem to be, which we spoke of a little before in our clearing that of *Esdræ*. There is no body but knows that such Synagogues there were in every City; therefore whether you take the word in that of *John*, ch.10. v.17. for the Assembly it self, or for the place *where they assembled*, it thwarts not our Opinion any manner of ways: and if at most it were denied to be a Civil *Assembly*, yet must it manifestly appertain to religious matters. But I dispute not here whether he who entertains erroneous Opinions of the true Religion, be to be excommunicated: for the Pharisees, says *John* 9. *v.* 22. agreed, that if any man did confess that Jesus was Christ, that he should be put out of the Synagogue. But farther yet, it was matter of *Repute and* Honour to be of the Synagogue, as of the other hand 'twas a piece of Reproach to be cast out of it; as may, methinks, be *easily* gathered from *Joh.* 12.42. where 'tis said, that among the Chief Rulers also (of whom perhaps *Nichodemus* was one) many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue; and the reason is added, *v.* 43. for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Besides, it appears that even the cir-

cumciſed Publicans were not admitted into the Synagogues, in the ſence we now take the word: for the Phariſees would not endure ſo much as to ſpeak with them; and one of their Cavils at Chriſt was, for his familiar converſe with thoſe men. But I cannot imagine, that any one who underſtands himſelf, can affirm that theſe very *Publicans and Sinners* were debarred from the Paſſover, from the Temple, *or* from Sacrifices; therefore muſt they needs be two quite different things, ſo to be diſſynagogu'd, and to be kept from the Sacraments and Rites of Gods own inſtitution: which is manifeſt, as well from what has been already ſaid, as from *Acts* 5. *v.* 42. for the Diſciples after they had been ſeverely leſſon'd by the Synagogue, did not yet ceaſe to teach and preach Jeſus Chriſt dayly in the Temple. What a many of Synagogues was *Paul* put out of? but the Jews never caſt it in his teeth, never accus'd or condemn'd him for coming into the Temple, and for offering there for himſelf and others. But to cloſe all this, more may yet be ſaid, could it never ſo plainly be made out that the Phariſees counted it one and the ſame thing to exclude from the Synagogue and from the Sacraments (which I ſhall make appear never was, is, or could be true;) yet they muſt needs have done this (as well as many other things) againſt the expreſs Law of *Moſes*, and then are we obliged not to imitate but condemn the Pattern: for we are to live up to the Laws, and not to Preſidents; and not walk after any one in his deviations from the Laws of God, unleſs we will confound all *the Rules and Meaſures of Right and Wrong:* Let us indeed have an eye to the good Examples of the good, and ſtrive to come after them, but not after the bad of the bad. I have been ſo particular (though with all the brevity I could) on this Argument, becauſe ſome do mightily hug and applaud themſelves in it, though to the deceiving of themſelves as well as others.

XXIII. 'Tis

XXIII. Tis therefore a moſt certain unſhaken and indiſputable truth, that *under the Old Teſtament* no man was ſhut out from Sacraments for Immoralities; but on the contrary, all the holy Prieſts, Prophets, Judges, Kings, and at laſt, *John* the Baptiſt, that moſt eminent and moſt holy Forerunner of Chriſt, rather ſent Invitations to all, *good and bad*, to come in and keep them according to the Law, than ſhut the doors upon them.

XXIV. But now our Sacraments, and thoſe of our Forefathers under the Old Teſtament, are (as to the things ſignified, *ſee the ſpiritual ſence of them*) *altogether* the ſame, as *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 10. plainly intimates. And therefore unleſs it can appear that the Law of *Moſes* either is aboliſhed or changed in this point, none has authority to ſet up a contrary practice.

XXV. For as againſt the Anabaptiſts we do well urge as a moſt effectual Argument, that ſince Baptiſm came in the place of Circumciſion, and that Chriſt did nowhere forbid the baptizing of Infants, it cannot be leſs lawful for us to baptize our Children, than 'twas for the Jews to circumciſe theirs; ſo may we here argue with equal force, that the Lords Supper ſucceeded to the eating the Paſſover: but Vice and Immoralities were not puniſhed by prohibiting *them to eat* the Paſſover, nor were the Jews on any ſuch account drove from it; but the Law did rather invite all, *of what age or condition ſoever*, eſpecially every Male, to keep it: Which being not found to be either antiquated nor aboliſhed, *but holding ſtill as to the reaſon of it*, Crimes are no more now to be puniſhed by denying us the Lords Supper; neither ought any one on this account to be rejected. But enough has been ſaid with reference to the Old Teſtament; 'tis time we ſhould now come to Chriſt and his Apoſtles, that is, to the New Teſtament.

XXVI. Now we read not any where that our Lord and Saviour

Saviour Christ did in any wise interdict any person access unto, or use of the Sacraments; or that he so much as commanded the Apostles that they should do any thing like it: for Christ came not into the world to destroy the Law, but to fulfil and perfect it; therefore when the Law commanded all but the unclean to celebrate the Passover, Christ would not surely forbid any one.

XXVII. For 'tis very clear that Christ checkt no body for using Sacraments, or frequenting the Temple and Sacrifices; but onely caution'd them to use them aright, and agreeably to the Will and Law of God: He went into the same Temple with Pharisees, Sadduces, Publicans, and who not, be they bad, be they good; he was with them at the same Sacrifices; used all Sacraments promiscuously with the rest of the people; was baptized of *John* with the same Baptism as those wicked ones were.

XXVIII. Upon this account was it that Jesus hindred not *Judas* his Betrayer from eating the last *Paschal* Lamb *with him*, but he sate down *to it* with all his twelve Disciples: not but that there are some who endeavour to prove that *Judas* was not present at this new *instituted* Supper of *our* Lord (which is an hard, if not an impossible matter to evince from Sacred Writ) but that he withdrew before the Institution: yet sure none can have the hardiness to deny that *Judas* was according to the Law admitted to the eating the Passover; on which Concession, our Argument holds firm and unanswerable: for whether he went or went not out before the Institution of another Supper, (though the latter carries most of probability in it, and always hath been believed by most men) this still is plain, that he was present and partaker of the first, and was not openly or expresly forbidden the latter: Neither read we any where that Christ commanded him to go out, to the end that he might not be a Communicant in his new-*instituted* Supper; if therefore

he

he did go out, he did it voluntarily, and of his own head; neither went he out for any such purpose. But the Question with us is, what Christ, not what *Judas* did: 'Tis enough for our purpose, that Christ never commanded him to withdraw from his Supper.

XXIX. But the common Put-off and Salvo for this matter, is very light and frivolous; That *Judas* his Crime was not of a publick nature, and that on that consideration he was not to be put out: for first, he had struck the bargain, and agreed the price with the Pharisees before, and Christ acquainted his Disciples with it at that Suppertime; this was an *ample* Publication *by Christ himself*, and should therefore have been the rather made a President and Example *in this matter*. But secondly, (whatever this may be) he was at least known to be a Thief before; and though such an one he were, yet did our Lord commit a Ministry *and Office* to him, and bestowed on him the power of casting out Devils, of healing the Sick, and of doing other such-like Miracles. Lastly, Christ admitted him as well as the rest of his Disciples to the Celebration of the Passover, all the whiles he was with him. Is not this proof enough that Christ had no mind, *no intent or desire* that flagitious persons should be punisht by debarring them the Sacraments? Sure 'tis matter of greater moment to take a wicked man into the Ministry, than to admit such an one to the Supper! yet we see that Christ did both to *Judas*.

XXX. 'Tis farther observable, that at his first Supper the Disciples began to contend about Greatness and Superiority; yet was none of them shut out thence on that score: nay, Christ would and commanded that all should drink of the Cup, *Mat.* 26. *v.* 27. which, *Mark* 14. *v.* 23. is said to be actually done: (And as to this business, the reason holds in the Bread as well as Wine.) Now what can it be believed was the mind *and intent* of Christ, but

to,

to ratifie what God had before commanded by *Moſes*, to wit, that none who were initiated by Baptiſm, ſhould be debarr'd from that publick and ſolemn act of Thankſgiving, who had a mind to be at it? Whence it appears, that no perſon is to be thruſt from the Lords Table, who embraces the Doctrine of Chriſt, and ſubmits to be inſtructed by him.

XXXI. Chriſt doth not deſire that his Kingdom (I ſpeak of his viſible and external one in this world) ſhould be of a narrower extent among Chriſtians, than were the boundaries and limits ſet unto the Jews. As therefore God commanded that all that were externally circumciſed, ſhould participate *and communicate* in the ſame Sacraments and Rites; but that Criminals and other Tranſgreſſors, ſhould by the Sword and other *civil* Puniſhments be reſtrained and puniſhed: ſo is it Chriſt's Will, that all who are baptized into him, all that profeſs Chriſtianity, and have a right and ſound ſenſe of Religion, ſhould be admitted to the uſe of all external Ceremonies and Sacraments; whilſt the Wicked and Criminal fall under the correction of the Magiſtrate, whether it be by Death, Exile, Impriſonments, or other the like Penalties. And the Parables of the Net, Marriage, and Tares, ſeem to import no leſs.

XXXII. We find among the Apoſtles, *Paul* eſpecially, no fewer nor leſs plain and forcible Arguments for our Aſſertion. Firſt, there are no Footſteps that the Apoſtles did either teach or practiſe ſuch a *kind of* Excommunication. This Argument, though it be not ſo evincing and ſtrong of it ſelf, yet will be made unanſwerable, if we conſider that the Apoſtles all their time kept themſelves to a ſtrict obſervance of ſuch Laws of *Moſes* which Chriſt had not abrogated; as may be gathered out of the 21th and 28th Chapters of the *Acts of the Apoſtles*: for which cauſe they never did nor would attempt to put by any one

one from our Sacraments (which differ from the Sacraments of their Forefathers, in the ſignes and time of ſignifying onely) if he be a profeſſed Chriſtian, and make a right Confeſſion of that Doctrine: for they neither did nor taught any thing contrary to the Precepts of *Moſes*, which Chriſt had not before abrogated, but kept themſelves to as cloſe and ſtrict obſervance of the Law after his death, as before; as the chief of the Apoſtles bears witneſs in the before-cited places: for that permiſſion, to live free from the Law of *Moſes*, was to the Gentiles onely, not to the Convert Jews; which ought carefully to be remark'd here, for the ſake of what follows. And as to the ſubſtance of their Doctrine, they taught nothing that interfer'd with *Moſes* and the Prophets: for had they taught any thing diſſonant, the *Bereans* could not have judged it agreeable to thoſe Scriptures that they ſearched, *Acts* 17. *v.* 11.

XXXIII. But to adventure yet one ſtep farther: Much may be ſaid for the ſenſe of *Moſes*; (which jumps altogether with ours) but for the contrary Opinion, *Paul* affords us not one Argument: for that Apoſtle, in 1 *Cor.* 8. *v.* 7. excludes neither thoſe who yet *retaining ſome fear and conſcience of the Idols*, thought them to be ſomething, nor thoſe proud boaſting Gnoſticks, who in εἰδωλείῳ, *in the Houſe or Temple* of the Idol (at leaſt, in the Room that was ſet apart for their ſolemn and publick Idol-Feſtivals) did promiſcuouſly with the profane and impious Idolaters, eat of the things offer'd to Idols: A thing expreſly forbid by *Moſes*, *Exod.* 34. *v.* 15. by the Apoſtles, *Acts* 15. *v.* 29. by *John*, *Rev.* 2. *v.* 14. This was a ſin as hainous as 'twould be now-a-days for a man to dare to be preſent *and communicate* at a Popiſh Maſs; as any one may eaſily gather out of the 10th Chapter of that Epiſtle: for *Paul* there proves, that ſuch as thoſe do not leſs declare themſelves by that action to be Communicants,

and keep a Fellowſhip with Devils, than they teſtifie themſelves to be Members of the myſtical Body of Chriſt by partaking of the Lords Supper.

XXXIV. Again, *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 1, 2, *&c.* reaſons the matter thus: As (ſays he) God ſpared not in old time ſuch as luſted after evil things, nor Idolaters, nor Fornicators, nor ſuch as tempted and murmured againſt Chriſt; though all of them were baptized unto *Moſes* in the ſame Baptiſm, *v.* 2. and did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink, *v.* 3, and 4. ſo ſhall he not ſpare even you too, whoever of you are defiled with like abominations, though you alſo all eat in like manner, as did they, of the ſame Bread, and drink of the ſame Cup with the righteous and holy ones. By this it is ſeen, *firſt*, that the Sacraments of the Jews before Chriſt, and ours ſince, are, as to the internal and heavenly *deſigne of them*, the very ſame; elſe would the Apoſtles Argument be of no force. *Secondly*, 'Tis evident that in both caſes many vile and wicked Wretches, and notoriouſly known and mark'd for ſuch, found admittance. *Thirdly*, 'Tis alſo clear, that none were commanded to keep away (as the Excommunicated now-a-days always are:) for the Apoſtle doth not ſay that ſuch, whilſt ſuch, ſhould be kept from coming; but foretels *and denounces* like puniſhments on them, as befel ſuch ſinners of old: Some of whom *Moſes* with the Levites ſlew, *Exod.* 32. *v.* 28. ſome God himſelf deſtroyed with Fire and Sword, Serpents and Earthquakes; which was theſe Corinthians caſe too: for, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 11. *v.* 30. *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep*; that is, *are puniſhed by Diſeaſe and Death from God.*

XXXV. In the next Chapter (*though St.* Paul *take notice of Diviſions and Hereſies among them, and of ſome drunken at the Lords Supper, yet*) neither are thoſe Schiſmaticks and Sectaries, thoſe Drunkards, or others of whatſoever

ſoever debauched Principles, commanded to be kept from eating it; there's no tittle or word of any ſuch Interdiction: Yet doth he there redreſs leſſer matters, as that every man ſhould eat at home, if he be hungry. How could he have here paſs'd over this in ſilence, had he approved it? had he thought it ſo neceſſary to the Church? But the Apoſtle well knew that the Law commanded otherwiſe, and that the uſe of Sacraments in the Church was to other purpoſes than the puniſhing of Moral Vices by their deprivation; therefore commands he that every man examine himſelf, 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. the Precept is not, that they ſhould try and examine one another. Nay, the Apoſtle there cautions them that they eat worthily; *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf*, v. 29. He doth not in the leaſt command that unworthy Communicants ſhould be denied acceſs, but threatens them with ſad dooms from the hand of God. He divides the Eaters into two ſorts, according to their differing Complexions; the worthy, and unworthy ones: he gives no Precept to either for their not eating, but would that all ſhould eat worthily.

XXXVI. Afterwards, in 2 *Cor.* ch. 12 and 13. he threatens not thoſe (who, 2 *Cor.* 12. *v.* 21. after a former admonition had not repented of the Uncleanneſs, and Fornication, and Laſciviouſneſs which they had committed) with excluſion from the Table of the Lord, but, 2 *Cor.* 13. 10. according to the power and authority which the Lord had given him, *to edification, and not to deſtruction, he would not ſpare*, ch. 13. v. 2. and 10. *that is*, he would proceed with rigour and ſeverity, *according to his extraordinary and Apoſtolick power*; a thing he often did *threaten* in his Epiſtles: But nowhere has he preach'd this Doctrine (which is the Queſtion now in hand) That any ſhould be interdicted the Sacraments; nor has he commanded Preſbyters or any others to do it. But had

he been diſpoſed to have this way given check to Wickedneſs, he would *aſſuredly* have ordain'd that Sinners ſhould have been kept from Sacraments till they became reform'd *in their manners*, eſpecially ſince he had before *appointed or* ordain'd Elders in the ſame Church, 1 *Cor.6. v.* 5. and had corrected the Abuſes, the miſs-celebration in the Lords Supper. But perhaps we may have more to ſay to this hereafter.

XXXVII. As we find no mention made of Excommunication in the *receiving and* celebrating *this* Sacrament, ſo neither doth any thing of that nature appear in its Inſtitution; nor indeed hath the Scripture taken any notice thereof in her Explications of the uſe and ends of Sacraments: Whereas had Sacraments been given to the Church for this, as well as other ends and purpoſes, that they ſhould have been for Penalties upon Offences and Offenders, ſome mention muſt needs have been of it. The end *and deſignes* of this Inſtitution of the Lords Supper, are, That we may commemorate in the moſt ſolemn manner the Death of our Lord: That we may pay our Homage in a publick Recognition and Thankfulneſs, for the Deliverance he hath purchaſed for us: That we may remind our ſelves, and by our preſence bear teſtimony to others, that we have no other Food of Life, but a Crucified Saviour; no other Drink, but his Bloud poured out for us: That we may declare our ſelves as well penitent for our paſt *courſe of* Life, as that we have enter'd upon thoughts *and reſolutions* of a better; and that we embrace the Chriſtian Doctrine, are the Members of Chriſt, belong unto his Church, in which we deſire piouſly and religiouſly both to live and die. Has the Scripture anywhere prohibited any man from performing theſe things? But, you may perhaps ſay, Some men have *too* frequently relaps'd to their former bad courſes, and become not one whit the better. *I anſwer*, He that by the *aid and* impulſe

pulſe of the Holy Spirit hath the thoughts of his heart right at the time of his receiving, the Scripture turns him not away; but God only knows whether and how long he will hold on his good purpoſes *and reſolutions*. 'Tis our duty to hope always the beſt of all men, however we may ſometimes be miſtaken: nay, we ought to addreſs our hearty Prayers to God, that he would vouchſafe to ſtrengthen and confirm both us and them in all true Religion and Virtue. But ſtill the ſinner is to be told of his faults, is to be reprehended, admoniſhed, and adviſed, that he may *ſo* try himſelf, that (as the Apoſtle cautions) he eat and drink not Damnation to himſelf.

XXXVIII. Laſtly, Whether are the Sacraments (either for the authority *of their Inſtitution*, or *the intrinſick* dignity *of their* nature) of greater worth than the Word, *that Word of God which Chriſt preached?* or is there more neceſſity of the uſe of thoſe, than of this? None without the Word, *can or* could be ſaved; but who can doubt but that many have been, and yet may be ſaved, without the Sacraments, (eſpecially the Lords Supper) provided they are not contemners of them? The Apoſtle ſeems to have thought ſo too, when he ſays he was not ſent to baptize, but to preach the Word. Do not almoſt all men ſay that the Word is *plain* and viſible, and ſets before our eyes what words ſignifie to our ears? Why do we therefore make no attempts to ſhut any out from the Word, but do it from the Sacraments, eſpecially the Euchariſt; and that contrary unto (or at leaſt much beſide *the intereſt* of) Gods expreſs Command? Do they ſay 'tis becauſe the Word is for all, but that the Sacraments were inſtituted onely for Converts to the Word? I know all that, and ſpeak not therefore of Turks *and Pagans*, ſuch as never came within *the Churches Pale*, but of ſuch as God hath called and ingrafted into his Church, ſuch as own the Doctrine, and deſire (at leaſt to all outward

ward appearance) to be worthy partakers of *theſe Sacraments.*

XXXIX. Hitherto have I ſtrongly demonſtrated, that there is no word or inſtance, no footſtep or preſident to be found either of Chriſts, or among his Apoſtles, of ſuch Chaſtizements, or rather *Reſtraints and* Coertions put upon wicked men. Since therefore neither the Old nor New Teſtament hath commanded this ſort of puniſhing, but the clean contrary is often found in both of them, we may juſtly think *this* Excommunication (as far, *I mean*, as it excludes men from the uſe of the Sacraments for improbity of Life, and vitiouſneſs of Morals) rather an Invention of Man, than any Law of God. It remains therefore, that we examine what thoſe who oppoſe us have to ſay for themſelves; and to convince the World, that all that they ſay has nothing of proof *or force* in it.

XL. They tell you of a Precept, *Mat.* 18. 15, 16, 17. and in St. *Paul's* Epiſtle they tell you too of an Example or Inſtance of that kind, 1 *Cor.* 5. 3, 4, 5. and 1 *Tim.* 1. 19, 20. We will take them in order; and firſt for that in *Matthew.*

XLI. 'Twas not the deſigne of Chriſt in that Chapter of St. *Matthew* to ſet up any new *Model* of Government, or form of putting Excommunications in execution, but to inſtruct his Diſciples how they ſhould avoid giving offence *or ſcandal* in the matter of righting themſelves in private Injuries done them: for ſince they who flie preſently to the Magiſtrate to right them (eſpecially where the Magiſtrate, as was that the Jews were then under, is an Heathen and prophane) do often give *occaſion of* offence *and ſcandal* thereby to the weak. He firſt exhorts *and adviſes* them, that they rather forgive Injuries, than run to the Magiſtrate upon every ſlight occaſion. Thus far doth he nothing but call to their minds that Precept of *Moſes*, *Lev.* 19. 17. (which *Eccluſ* 19. 13. hath a little more fully paraphras'd): After this, he directs, that if they

they are neceſſitated to reſort to the Magiſtrate *for redreſs*, that yet they ſhould not (if they would avoid ſcandal) accuſe their fellow-brethren the Jews, before the Roman *Judicatures*, till their own Magiſtrates fail'd in doing them Juſtice. The like Precept hath St. *Paul* given, 1 *Cor.* 6. 1, *&c.* (which place is a kind of Comment upon this) that is to ſay, that Chriſtians go not to Law with Chriſtians before the Unbelievers. This therefore is the true and genuine ſenſe of this of St. *Matthew*: If thy Brother (that is a Jew) treſpaſs againſt thee, try to make up the matter betwixt your ſelves alone; but if alone you cannot do it, try what may be done by the *Arbitrement and Mediation* of two or three *of your Brethren* (*the Jews ſtill*); and if this way you have not a juſt ſatisfaction and amends made you, tell it to the Church, that is, to the Sanedrim, to the Magiſtrate of your own Religion and Nation; and if he refuſe to hear him, *if he ſtand not to the judgment of your own chief Judicatures*, you may without juſt offence to any man, deal with him as with a Publican or Heathen that ſhould do you any injury, and whom you cannot implead nor call before any other Authority but the Roman Tribunals.

XLII. That this is the proper and genuine Interpretation of the place, is plain and evident from the whole *tenor and* ſeries of the Diſcourſe, but eſpecially from the concluſion of it, and from all its circumſtances: For,

Firſt, Chriſt talks not here of any enormous and publick Tranſgreſſions which belong'd to Religion, and the Laws and Rites of their Nation, for theſe the Sanedrim *or great Councils of the Jews* were to redreſs; but his diſcourſe is of private wrongs, which every man had power for himſelf to remit. One manifeſt proof of the truth of what I ſay, may be, for that all the whole Oration runs in the ſingular number: If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs *in ei*, againſt thee, go and tell him his faults between thee and him

him alone; and again, tell the Church, *&c.* and let him be to thee as an Heathen, *&c.* So *Luke* 17. *v.* 3. If thy Brother, ἁμάρτῃ εἰς σέ, and *v.* 4. if he treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times in a day, and ſeven times in a day turn again to thee, ſaying, I repent, thou ſhalt forgive him. We can no ways interpret εἰς σέ, *againſt thee*, here, to be meant againſt the Church: For when 'tis after ſaid, Tell it to the Church, the ſence would be, O Church, tell it to the Church. And again, we can as little interpret it with thy privity *and knowledge:* for neither the ſence of the words, nor the nature or circumſtances of the diſcourſe, will admit of ſuch an Explication. For why am I requir'd to tell a man his fault betwixt me and him alone, if I was *but as one* privy *to his Crime*, and that he treſpaſſed not privately and againſt me alone? Why ſhould I not rather be enjoyn'd to take in them with me whom he directly injur'd, that they and I might reprove him together? But Chriſt gives not that ſcope and liberty to take others with me in my firſt Applications to my injuring Brother: And therefore *'tis plain*, Chriſt ſpeaks of Injuries done me by my Brother privately. But farther yet, how can the words of St. *Luke* [*If he turn again to thee, thou ſhalt forgive him*] be accommodated to this ſence? Can we ſay that here, To thee, is put for, Thou being privy and conſcious *to the injury done by him?* What muſt then the meaning be of, Thou ſhalt forgive him? Muſt we here alſo ſay, Thou ſhalt be privy and conſcious to his forgiveneſs? Did the prodigal ſon, *Luke* 15. 11. that ſinn'd againſt Heaven, *onely* ſin in the *ſight* and privity of Heaven? 'Tis *indeed* plain enough in 1 *Cor.* 8. 12. that we ſin againſt the Brethren, when we do a thing which may become a Stumbling block to them through their weakneſs. But this of St. *Matthew* is quite of a different nature; and truly the whole frame of this Diſcourſe, and way of wording it, can't allow us to expound it of any other than private

private wrongs; which every man has power and right in himself to *remit and* forgive: And if the ſufferer repent him not of his own accord, this is to be done on the part of the Injured, to bring him to it.

Secondly, This is again proved, for that the Apoſtles of Chriſt did not otherwiſe underſtand him; as may be gather'd from St. *Peter*'s Queſtion, *v.* 21. Whether his ſeven times forgiving his offending Brother would be enough? *Peter* could not be to learn, that he neither could nor ought to pardon an offence which concern'd others, or the whole Church.

Thirdly, The words Unto thee, *v.* 17. is a farther proof hereof. Chriſt doth not ſay, Let him be unto us, or unto others, or unto the Church; but let him be unto thee as a Publican, unto thee who art or haſt been the injur'd man. Chriſt, though he addreſs his diſcourſe to all the Apoſtles equally, yet commands that the Wrong Doer be held for an Heathen and Publican by him alone who is the Sufferer thereby; and that too, not till the Church (*that is, the lawful Magiſtracy of the Jews in their Sanedrim*) had admoniſh'd him. Beſides, he ſpeaks not there of things which relate to the whole Church, or to any number of perſons; but which relate to private men.

Fourthly, Chriſt ſpeaks of ſuch Treſpaſſes which we are obliged to pardon as often as the Offender ſays, he repents. And that this Remiſſion and Forgiveneſs tranſacted between two alone, puts an end to the Controverſie, appears from theſe words, *v.* 19. *Again, I ſay unto you, If two of you ſhall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.* But an hanious *and publick* Offence, which concerns many perſons, or *perhaps* the whole Church, may not be remitted by one alone. And here we may take notice by the by, of that Adverb *again*; whereby he intimates his having ſpoke before to the ſame purpoſe, though in different words.

Fifthly, Christ speaks of Trespasses and Offences which the actor of them is not asham'd of, or which he will not stick *frankly* to confess and own before any man. Had he spoke of Crimes of a deeper dye, which concern'd many, or the whole Church, 'twould be in vain to bring him to others that might bear witness (as 'tis *v.* 16.): for such an Action, if 'twere *yet* private, no Offender would avow it before witness, *which might endanger him.* But in all things here discourst of, this gradual procedure recommended by Christ, must be observ'd; and therefore he speaks of private Injuries, which others have nothing to do with.

Sixthly, Christ speaks of such Offences which the Church, he here speaks of, doth not otherwise punish than by admonishing the Offender with bare words: for 'twould be needless to have added, *If he hear not the Church*, could an open punishment have redress'd the Offence.

Seventhly, The Parable that follows, *v.* 23. gives a clear proof to this matter; its conclusion being, that God will not forgive them their Trespasses, who from their hearts forgive not the Trespasses of a repenting Brother, without exacting farther pains or penalties upon him. But the Church (as *some of* our Adversaries tell us) ought not thus to forgive, but ought to keep them, at least for a time, from the Sacraments, till they shall have given testimony of their Repentance to Elders *surrogated and* appointed for that purpose: So that such a Church will not seven times a day forgive them that say they repent, but will see the argument and *proof* of that Repentance; things which Christ says not a word of: he requires no farther argument than the Confession of the Fault; which scarce any man will *have occasion to* repeat seven times a day, who hath not plaid the Hypocrite *in some, or all, of the former six.*

We

We have, I think, from all this evidently prov'd, that Christ in this 18th Chapter of St. *Matthew*, speaks nothing of Crimes that are to be redressed by Excommunications, but of light and private Injuries, and the way and means of making them up and reconciling them; and therefore belongs not to the business of Excommunication. If indeed we do but well weigh the close of that Chapter, all doubt from hence must be at an end.

XLIII. He that can and will needs imagine that Christ in this 18th Chapter of St. *Matthew*, set up or instituted Excommunication, ought to shew in which of the words 'tis contain'd: If he cannot shew it any where there comprized, 'tis to no purpose to say 'tis there commanded. But if it be there, it must either be in these words, *v.* 17. *Tell it unto the Church*: or in these, *Let him be to thee as an heathen and a publican*: or *lastly*, in these, *v.* 18. *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven*, &c. But I doubt not to prove it with most unanswerable Arguments, that none of these words comprize any such matter; and since it can be found in no other, 'tis lost labour to enquire here after it.

XLIV. These words of Christ, *Tell it unto the Church*, prove no more than this, that he who has been injur'd by his Brother, and all his endeavours of reconciliation with him have been ineffectual, may *honestly and lawfully* complain of him to the Church, or to the Governours and Rulers of the Church. And further, that this same Church hath a right and authority to reprehend and admonish the Wrong Doer, that he cease from being so: *But* no more of power is here given to the Church, than (*v.* 17.) was before given to the one or two Witnesses, excepting onely in this, that the Cause is not to be brought before the Church without the Witnesses. Is it not therefore a weak way of reasoning, to say, The Church has power to admonish him that trespasses against his Brother; therefore

has she power to excommunicate him, or to debar him the Sacrament? But now, some may *perhaps* urge, that the Church not having a Right *or Authority* of punishing the guilty with Death and other corporal punishments, she is necessitated to have recourse to this way of denying them the Sacrament. But I answer, Were the Antecedent as true (as indeed from both the old Testament, from the History of all Ages, from what our own Eyes and Senses tell us, we are assured 'tis quite otherwise) no such consequence could be drawn from it; nor can it be ever proved that these things have any necessary coherence one with another: The Church hath not the power of the Sword, *she can't kill and slay*; therefore may she, must she, drive from the Sacrament those who own and profess the same Religion, *the same saving Faith*; *she must drive from that Sacrament that was instituted for, and ought to be open and common to all that outwardly profess the same Faith.*

XLV. If yet our Adversaries think Excommunicatio to have been instituted in these other words, *Let him to thee as an heathen man and a publican*, I utterly d it: Nether can it by any Art or Rhetorick, Perswa or Argument whatever, be demonstrated whilst the w stands, that this *form of* Speech, *Let him be to thee a heathen man and a publican*, should tantamount to th Let him be excommunicate, let him be kept from the Sa crament: for even in the days of Christ, the circumcised Publicans, were they Jews or Gentiles, were not prohibited the Temple, Sacrifices, Rites, Ceremonies, and Sacraments. And truly Christ may seem to have joyn'd the Publican with the Heathen, to prevent all thoughts and suspition of his here interdicting them *such Rites and* Sacraments. How could the Publicans by the *Jewish* Law be shut out from the Temple, and from worshipping God *there*, when 'twas not so much as a sin to be a Farmer or Col-

Collector of Taxes and Tribute-money; nor found to be any where prohibited by God? Sure 'tis, that Christ no-where forbad it. When the Publicans aſkt *John* what they muſt do to be ſaved, he doth not bid them quit their Employments; but directs them, *Luke* 3. 13. not to exact more than that which was appointed them. And, *Luke* 19. 5. Christ doth not order *Zacheus* (the Chief among the Publicans) to lay down his Office, nor finds any fault with him on account of his Employ: and the Publican that, *Luke* 18. 10. went up into the Temple to pray, and return'd to his houſe more juſtified, in the judgment of Christ, than the Phariſee; we do not read that he left off being a Publican; nor thoſe others who, *Luke* 7. 29. and *Luke* 15. 7. juſtified and praiſed God, and were dear and intimate with Christ and his Apoſtles. In ſhort, I ſay, that the Holy Writ, that is, God hath not at any time or place condemn'd, or any ways ſpoke againſt Publicans for their very being Publicans, that is, Tax-gatherers; which all ſober men will voluntarily grant me. Which Conceſſion, I argue thus: God in Scripture [illegible] not a Publican as a Publican. Now whom [illegible]demns not, he cannot be excommunicated by [illegible] of God; therefore no Publican could by the [illegible]od be prohibited acceſs to the Temple, or to Di[illegible]rſhip. I therefore make this concluſion: No Pub[illegible]ould by the Law be condemned or excommunica[illegible] but Chriſt commands that he that neglects to hear [illegible]at Church which he there ſpeaks of, ſhould be to him as a Publican: therefore he wills, that he ſhould be to him as a man who was not by the Law of God accurſed, that is, not barely for his being a Publican. And whereas theſe Excommunication-men ſay, that the words, Let him be to thee as a Publican, ſignifie as much as if he had ſaid, Let him be to thee as a Publican is to the Phariſees; 'tis both abſurd, falſe, and impoſſible: for 'tis in no ſort credi-

has she power to excommunicate him, or to debar him the Sacrament? But now, some may *perhaps* urge, that the Church not having a Right *or Authority* of punishing the guilty with Death and other corporal punishments, she is necessitated to have recourse to this way of denying them the Sacrament. But I answer, Were the Antecedent as true (as indeed from both the old Testament, from the History of all Ages, from what our own Eyes and Senses tell us, we are assured 'tis quite otherwise) no such consequence could be drawn from it; nor can it be ever proved that these things have any necessary coherence one with another: The Church hath not the power of the Sword, *she can't kill and slay*; therefore may she, must she, drive from the Sacrament those who own and profess the same Religion, *the same saving Faith*; *she must drive from that Sacrament that was instituted for, and ought to be open and common to all that outwardly profess the same Faith.*

XLV. If yet our Adversaries think Excommunication to have been instituted in these other words, *Let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican*, I utterly deny it: Nether can it by any Art or Rhetorick, Perswasion or Argument whatever, be demonstrated whilst the world stands, that this *form of* Speech, *Let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican*, should tantamount to this, Let him be excommunicate, let him be kept from the Sacrament: for even in the days of Christ, the circumcised Publicans, were they Jews or Gentiles, were not prohibited the Temple, Sacrifices, Rites, Ceremonies, and Sacraments. And truly Christ may seem to have joyn'd the Publican with the Heathen, to prevent all thoughts and suspition of his here interdicting them *such Rites and* Sacraments. How could the Publicans by the *Jewish* Law be shut out from the Temple, and from worshipping God *there*, when 'twas not so much as a sin to be a Farmer or Col-

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credible, that Christ in the same place in which he design'd to institute (as our Adversaries will have it) a thing of that weight and moment, and so beneficial and necessary to the Church, should or would make the wicked action of most profligate men, the Rule and Measure for all the World to go by afterwards. Besides, it hath been already prov'd, that no man was ever excommunicated by the Jews, after the rate that we now talk of Excommunication. And lastly, all the words of Christ are inconsistent with this their interpretation: for Christ here talks neither of, nor with the Pharisees, but all is betwixt him and the Disciples, and *the subject of* the discourse is of avoiding Scandals; and this is the thing that Christ says, If the Wrong Doer neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee, that is, he is to thee, as a Publican; *to thee*, not to the Pharisees. Moreover, 'tis plain that Christ and his Disciples, and other good men, had no hatred for the Publicans; most certainly they never thought them to deserve Excommunication, but did dayly eat and live with them. And in that Christ joyns the Heathen and Publican together, we must needs acknowledge that Christ speaks of a matter common to them both: therefore these words, Let him be to thee as a Publican, must have quite another meaning from these, Let him be to thee as an excommunicate person. This therefore must be the meaning of the place: If he neglect to hear the Church, you may (as to this matter) proceed against him without offence or scandal to any man, as if you had to do with an Heathen man or a Publican. Now he that had a Controversie with any such, was forced to submit his Cause to the Roman Magistracy; (which is plain, as to the Heathens alone: and that 'twas so for the Publicans, may easily appear, for that they were the sworn Officers of the Romans, even against their own Nation; and for that also, that they could expect scarce common Justice from the

the Phariſees and Chiefs of the Jews, who accounted them the moſt deſpicable and profligate of mankind.) But Chriſt allowed not this *Appeal to the Roman Magiſtrate* againſt a Brother-Jew, till he had endeavoured a Reconciliation that way which Chriſt propoſed, and which had before been preſcribed them by the Law. St. *Paul's* excuſe for himſelf, in the laſt of the *Acts*, looks much the ſame way, to wit, that he had never appeal'd unto *Cæſar* had he not been conſtrain'd; nor did he it to accuſe the Jews, but defend himſelf from violence and wrong. The Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 6. 1. commands, that if any Chriſtian had a matter againſt another, he ſhould decide it before the Saints, and not preſently go to law before the unjuſt: But if a Chriſtian had juſt cauſe of Action againſt an Infidel, what doubt is there, but that he might proſecute his Right before an Heathen Magiſtrate? So if any one did neglect or deſpiſe the Sentence, Judgment, *and Admonitions* of the Elders of the Church, he that was the Sufferer, the injur'd perſon, might without offence to his Neighbour, appeal unto the Heathen Magiſtrate.

XLVI. But we ſhall handle this matter with the more perſpicuity, if we take into examination what, and of what nature that Church was, which Chriſt commanded the injur'd perſon to tell it unto: in the clearing of which, I lay this for the entrance and foundation; which I doubt not but all men will allow of, and I know none that ever denies it, (*viz.*) That Chriſt ſpeaks of a Church that was then in being; how could he otherwiſe have bid them tell it to a Church which was *then* nowhere to be found, and of which, and of its *nature and* conſtitution, they as yet heard nothing? Had he deſign'd the raiſing a new Church, or new form of Government *as yet* unknown to the Apoſtles, he had deliver'd them but a very lame Inſtitution, for that he neither told them who were that Church, nor how, nor of what *ſort or number* of men it was:

was to be made up of; not the ways of their judicial proceedings, nor *what* penalties *they might inflict*, *and the like*: Neither did he ſpeak of all kind of ſins, as I have before prowed; and even they who build their Excommunication upon this Text, are forc'd themſelves to confeſs as well as we (for they openly own) that Chriſt took notice here onely of private Treſpaſſes. But whenever Chriſt made any new Inſtitution, he omitted nothing that was requiſite to its being and ſubſiſtency: here he onely ſays, *Tell it unto the Church*; and if he neglect to hear her, he gives the Complainant liberty to look on him as a Publican: here's no penalty annext *to the Contumacy*. St. *Luke* when he ſets down the ſame paſſage, recounts it not with all thoſe particularities as St. *Matthew* does. The other two Evangeliſts make not the leaſt mention of it; who yet would ſcarce have paſs'd over a matter of ſuch moment and neceſſity, had they known that Chriſt had then firſt made any ſuch new Inſtitution. To which we may adde, that the Apoſtles were all along firmly perſwaded that Chriſt ſhould not die, or change the Jewiſh Rites; nor did they here, by word or otherwiſe, declare themſelves not to underſtand what Chriſt here taught them, or ſhew any forwardneſs to aſk farther after it, or to wonder, as if he had told them an unuſual and unheard-of piece of Doctrine. *Peter* onely wondered at this, that he was requir'd to forgive his Brother ſo many times *together*: *Surely* therefore they never took theſe words of Chriſt to be inſtitutive of a new form of Government, which they had never dreamt of before, but believed themſelves to be taught (as truly they were) when *and for what* they might without offence and ſcandal, accuſe or implead a Brother Jew before an Heathen Magiſtrate. And at this day 'tis rarely ſeen that Jews go to law with Jews before Chriſtian Judges.

XLVII. But if any aſk me whether and how then can this

this Precept reach all men? whether it be of farther uſe than for thoſe alone that live under an Unchriſtian Magiſtracy? my anſwer is, That the firſt part of it, of labouring a Reconciliation before we appeal to the Magiſtrate, *or go to law about the matter*, belongs to all Chriſtians; but the latter is of no *force or* uſe, but where true Profeſſors live under an Unchriſtian *or Antichriſtian* Magiſtrate. St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 6. *v.* 1. & 4. therefore adviſes the *Corinthians* to chuſe out ſome among themſelves who may judge *ſuch Controverſies betwixt man and man*, that they *GO NOT TO LAW BEFORE THE UNJUST, that is, the Heathen Roman Judges.* Who doubts but that the *Corinthians* might lawfully have conven'd *a Chriſtian Brother that had injur'd them*, before the Roman and Gentile Tribunals, if he had refuſed to ſtand to the Determination of thoſe who were choſe from among themſelves *to judge on ſuch occaſions*, or if he mended not upon their Sentence? 'Tis certain, that St. *Paul*, when he ſaw himſelf hardly preſſed by the Jews, appealed unto *Cæſar*, *Acts* 25. 11. which, *Acts* 28. 19. he excuſes to thoſe Jews that lived at *Rome*. But he that ſhall carefully compare *Lev.* 19. with *Eccluſ* 19. and 1 *Cor.* 6. with this Chapter of St. *Matthew*, will be able much more clearly and eaſily to underſtand this whole matter, and may obſerve how well all hangs together; eſpecially if he diligently note the latter part of Chriſt's and of St. *Paul's* words, which were juſtly omitted in *Moſes* and *Eccleſiaſticus*, there being then no occaſion for them, for that the Jewiſh Nation was not then ſubject to any forreign Power, as they were in our Saviour's and St. *Paul's* time to the Roman Empire.

XLVIII. And thus far, as I conceive, all will eaſily agree that Chriſt ſpoke of a Church which was then in being, I mean, the Church in *Judea*; but quickly ſhall we be divided again in our enquiry what Chriſt underſtood by the word Church: for ſometimes it is put for the whole

Congregation or Multitude *gathered together*; ſometimes for the Senate, Council, or Elders, which were its Governours. Thus find we the Hebrew words to ſignifie a Church, Company, or Congregation, (as *Num.*35.24,25. *Joſh.* 20. 6. *Pſal.* 82. 1. and elſewhere) which the Septuagint renders by the word συναγωγη a Congregation. Now there are Arguments of no little weight, *to induce us to conclude*, that Chriſt in this paſſage of St. *Matthew*, would not have us underſtand by the word Church, the Multitude or *Congregation of* People, but the Jewiſh Senate or Council, called ſometimes συνεδριον, γερουσια, συναγωγη· for, *firſt*, 'tis evident that Chriſt did not innovate any thing in the forms of Judicature or Government which were adminiſtred agreeable to the Law; nor did he himſelf, or permitted his Diſciples to do any thing contrary to what *Moſes* had rightly inſtituted by Gods command. Now *Moſes* did ordain, that ſuch Suits and Controverſies ſhould be decided not by the Multitude, but by the Senate or Sanedrim of ſuch and ſuch places; which at firſt was held at the Gates of each City, *where the Elders ſate to judge*. Had Chriſt thought of introducing any thing here contrary to the Inſtitution of *Moſes*, his Diſciples muſt needs have been highly moved at it, who were all their lives ſtrict obſervers of the Law. Let every man think with himſelf what *duſt and* Triumphs the Phariſees would have rais'd, could they have in truth fixt ſo criminal *an Action* upon him, that he in oppoſition to the Law of *Moſes*, had ſtir'd up the People againſt the Magiſtrate! What fairer pretext could they have wiſh'd to lay Sedition to his charge, than by proving upon him this attempt, to ſet up the People againſt the Magiſtrate, contrary to Gods determination? to commit to them the Examination of Witneſſes? to give them a power to convene whom they would before them? to grant them cognizance of Cauſes, and power of Judicature? *Secondly*, Chriſt commanded

to

to tell it unto that Church, which had power to ſend for and call before them the party accuſed; which might hear the Cauſe, which might examine Witneſſes, (and therefore he commands us in the ſecond place to take two or three, that the Fact may be competently prov'd) and laſtly, which might pronounce their Sentence *and Judgement* in the caſe. But every one muſt know, that theſe things could not be done by the Croud, the Multitude, without chuſing ſome ſet perſons who might manage and moderate matters. (It muſt be a very ſmall Congregation, *a very handful of men*, who could be able of themſelves, without the Elders, to diſpatch ſuch Cauſes: for which reaſon ſome have rightly judg'd that this Precept of Chriſt could not hold well, *could be of little or no uſe*, but when the Church conſiſted of very few Members.) But now ſince that they who thus preſide *in theſe Affairs*, are in very truth nothing but the Senate, the Sanedrim, *the Seſſions of the Elders*; it again follows, that Chriſt commanded not to tell it unto the Multitude, but to the *Council or* Sanedrim: and truly in Chriſt's time the People had not the power of chuſing their Magiſtracy and Governours. We muſt needs therefore by *the word* Church underſtand the Jewiſh Senate or Council; as 'tis plain the Diſciples did, from what has been already ſaid. Therefore if the meaning of the Church there, be *all the Members of it*, the People; we are then to tell it unto a Church which has *right and* authority to make choice of ſuch a Senate or Council as was that of the Jewiſh Church; but our Churches have no power to chuſe ſuch a Council as the Jewiſh Sanedrim was: nay, in Chriſt's time the Jews themſelves had not that liberty, as I told you juſt now. We might adde, that when the Scripture ſpeaks of the Multitude, it generally uſes the words People, Multitude, Children of *Iſrael*, or the like comprehenſive words; but when any thing is related to be ſaid or done in the Syna-

gogues, or in all the Congregation. I need not tell you that this form of ſpeech is uſual at this very day: for we ſay, we have communicated the matter to ſuch a Kingdom or State, when we have acquainted *onely* the King, Senate, or Governing part of ſuch State or Kingdom: We recount how this or that Nation has rewarded a man, when the Repreſentatives onely in ſuch a Dyet or Parliament hath been liberal-handed to them. 'Tis ſo common a thing to uſe phraſes of this nature, that 'tis wonderful ſo few ſhould have obſerv'd it.

But the ſum of all is this: Chriſt alter'd not the Cuſtoms of his time, nor introduced any Novelties or Changes into their *Courts of Judicature, or Meaſures and Ways of* Judging; nor do his Diſciples betray any ſuſpition of Innovation or Alteration: and therefore his Command is to acquaint the Sanedrim, before their *denier* reſort to the Heathen Magiſtracy.

XLIX. Now, 'tis evident from Holy Writ, (*as well as other Hiſtory*) that the Sanedrim was the legal Magiſtracy *of the Jewiſh Nation*, and that in Chriſts days they both kept and us'd the power of the Sword. Many things in the Narratives of the Paſſion of Chriſt, beſides other Teſtimonials, evince as much: They ſend armed men to take Jeſus; they proceed in examining Witneſſes, as the Law requir'd (at leaſt they pretended ſo); they command him to be ſet before them in Judgment; they delivered him bound to *Pilate*, after they had firſt publickly condemn'd him: they openly condemn *Stephen*, and command him to be ſtoned: they ſeize the Apoſtles, and put them in the common Priſon; they cauſe them to be beaten, after a general Conſult held about them: they give Letters and authority to *Paul* to bring any that he found of that way, bound to *Jeruſalem* for to be puniſhed. The Jews themſelves, with the Elders and High Prieſt, that is, the Sanedrim, ſay it in expreſs terms, by their Speaker *Tertul-*

lus;

law; who accuſing *Paul* before *Felix*, *Acts* 24. *v.* 2. adds, v. 6. *That they took him, and would have judg'd him according to their Law, but that* Lyſias *came upon them, and with great violence took him away out of their hands.* And *Acts* 23. *v.* 3. ſays *Paul* to the High Prieſt, *Sitteſt thou to judge me after the Law, and commandeſt me to be ſmitten contrary to the Law?* And afterwards, *Acts* 26. *v.* 10. *Paul* confeſſes before King *Agrippa* and *Feſtus*, that *many of the Saints he ſhut up in priſon, having received authority from the Chief Prieſts; and when they were put to death, he gave his voice againſt them, and puniſhed them often in every Synagogue, and compelled them to blaſpheme; and* farther, *perſecuted them into ſtrange Cities*; ſtill acting under the authority derived from the High Prieſts, as when he was going to *Damaſcus* by their Commiſſion, *v.* 12. I can't imagine but that *Agrippa*, and *Feſtus too*, knew well enough whether it was lawful or not for their Council to do ſo; and ſure they would not have acquitted him in the manner they did, *v.* 34, & 35. had not the Authority he had been committed by, been warrantable: for *Paul* ſhould have offended no leſs againſt *Cæſar*, than againſt the Phariſees. For he who doth an unlawful act by the permiſſion and command of them who have no right nor authority to permit and command, tranſgreſſes no leſs than they that command it: but no ſuch thing is charg'd upon the Accuſers or Accuſed; but *Paul* is fully acquitted, as one that *hath done nothing worthy of death or of bonds.* And had not the Jewiſh Sanedrim had this *authority and* liberty *then left them*, *Pilate* could not have ſaid to them, *Joh.* 18. 31. *Take ye him, and judge him according to your law:* And when they anſwer, that *it was not lawful for them to put any man to death*; this muſt be underſtood either (as St. *Auguſtin* interprets it) at the time of that Feſtival, for fear of the People, or (as St. *Chryſoſtom* expounds it) of that kind of Death which they

they desired that Christ should die. With which latter Opinion, the words of St. *John* which immediately follow, very well agree, *to wit, That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.* To the same purpose is that of *Mat.*26. 55,56. where Christ says, *I sate dayly with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me; but all this was done, that the Scriptures of the Prophets might be fulfilled.* They took him therefore at a time when, by reason of the Feast then at hand, and for fear of the People, they could not put him to death: vid. *Mat.*26 5. and *Mark* 14. 2. Since therefore they could not bear that he should live any longer, and they could not well take his life away themselves, it follows *of course*, that he must be deliver'd into the hands of the Romans; that so all things which he had, (*Mat.* 24.) foretold his Disciples, might be fulfilled; as the words of St. *John* intimate, and as *Augustine* and *Chrysostom* agree: And those *Cries and* Vociferations of the People, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*, give farther Testimony to this Interpretation.

L. By what has been said, the falsity of that Affirmation is apparently detected, which says, that the Sanedrim had not the power of the Sword, that is, the authority of Life and Death; and that *Stephen* was ston'd tumultuously by the Rabble, *and not by Decree of the Council.* For I think I have proved beyond all contradiction, that such a Power they had; and for St. *Stephen*'s case, 'tis clear, that he was not tumultuously slain, for that *Acts* 6. 12. he was solemnly brought and accused before the Council; Witnesses were produced, though false ones, *v.* 13. they carried him out of the City; and those Witnesses, as the Law provides, cast the first stones at him, as may be easily gather'd from their laying down their Clothes at *Saul*'s feet, *v.* 58. The same too may be as fully proved out of *other* Histories: for *Josephus* in his fourteenth book of the Antiquity

quity of the Jews (*ch.* 12. 16, & 17. according to the Greek Copies) tells us, That the Romans gave liberty to all Nations, and by name to the Jews who dwelt in or out of *Judea*, to uſe their own Laws in things relating to Religion, and to live freely according to their own Rites and Cuſtoms. And in that twelfth Chapter he quotes *Strabo* for his Author, that he (writing of the City *Cyrene*) *ſays*, they had there a Preſident *or Chief Ruler* who heard and decided their Cauſes, and tranſacted all affairs, as abſolutely as if they had been an Independent State. That alſo makes farther for us which we read, *Acts* 18. 15. of *Gallio* the Deputy of *Achaia*; where he tells them, that if it be a matter of *their Law*, they *may look to it*. The ſame *Joſephus*, lib. 16. ch. 4, & 5. recounts how *Herod* had obtained of *Agrippa*, that the Jews in *Aſia* might have the freedom of enjoying the Priviledges before that time indulg'd them by the Romans. I take occaſion to remember this, becauſe ſome object that *Herod deſtroy'd and* ſlew all the Sanedrim, and ſtript them of all Authority; as if none had ſucceeded thoſe that were kill'd: How likely is it that *Herod* ſhould take from them in *Jeruſalem* that power of judging in matters relating to Religion, and determining therein according to their Law, who endeavour'd to procure and preſerve the ſame to all the other *Aſiaticks*? Beſides, the time of Chriſt's preaching fell not under *Herod* or *Archelaus*, but under *the Government of Pilate*: 'Tis certain that the Jews forced even *Pilate* himſelf to ſend again out of the City the Roman Standards (which he had cauſed to be privately introduc'd) to prevent the breach of Gods Commands of ſuffering any Image in the City. *And that* they reſerv'd and continued this Power to themſelves, to the very deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, may be clearly gathered from *Joſephus* his Oration to the Beſieged; The Romans, ſays he (in his fifth Book of the Wars of the Jews, *ch.* 26.) exact Tribute of us, for that our Fore-

Forefathers have a long time been wont to pay it to theirs: If in this you comply, they'll neither ſack this our City, nor meddle with our Temple, but leave both you, your Goods, and Families free, and the free uſe and enjoyment of your ſacred Laws. *Titus* himſelf, after his having taken the City, ſaid almoſt the very ſame to the Jews, *lib. 6. chap.* 34. Whether therefore we conſult the Holy Writ, or the Jewiſh Hiſtory, 'tis an undoubted truth, that that Sanedrim which Chriſt commanded to tell it unto, had the power of the Sword, the power of Life and Death, eſpecially over thoſe who ſin'd againſt their Religion: (for in Civil matters, and Cauſes of Right and Wrong, where the Law had not ſpecified the Puniſhment, I do not queſtion but that the Romans encroached and uſurp'd, if not all, yet moſt of them, to themſelves, as is eaſily diſcernable out of Hiſtory, and may well be conjectur'd out of *Acts* 18. *v.* 12.)

LI. And 'tis no ways repugnant to what we have ſaid, that in *Joſephus* his Antiquities of the Jews, ſome of them tell *Albinus*, that it was not lawful for the High Prieſt to call the Sanedrim or Council, without his leave: For he there, as an Hiſtorian, relates what others did; not that he applauds or approves of the Fact thereby. Beſides, *peradventure* the High Prieſt during the *interregnum*, that is, whilſt *Albinus* (after the death of *Feſtus*) was on his Journey *thither*, ought not to ſummon a Court for a matter of that weight and moment, till the new Governour confirm'd him in that Authority: for he had procur'd that *James* the Lords Brother (who was vulgarly firnamed the *Juſt*) ſhould be put to death; who being a perſon well belov'd by all, many took it very ill *at his hands:* for he was but newly got to that Dignity, and not *approv'd of, or* confirm'd in it by the Roman Governour. And *Euſebius*, in the ſecond of his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, *chap.* 23. tells us, that this High Prieſt ſnatcht at this occaſion

caſion of the *interregnum*. But what's all this to our purpoſe? Was not *Archelaus*, who was ſtiled King in his Father *Herod*'s laſt Will (and that by the Allowance and Gift of *Cæſar*) was he not therefore King, becauſe he refus'd the Name and Authority of a King, till he had *Cæſar*'s confirmation for it? Are not the Magiſtrates of ſome Cities (of which there are many in *Germany*) who are ſubject to ſome particular Prince, not true and lawful Magiſtrates, becauſe on the death of the Prince they are requir'd to pray the Confirmation of their Priviledges from the Succeſſor? But now that the High Prieſt had power, after his Confirmation, to convoke the Judges of the Sanedrim, is clear enough, for that they do not ſay to *Albinus*, that this ſummoning them was in it ſelf unlawful, but that it ought not to have been done by him, without the *approbation and* privity of *Albinus*.

LII. It has now been fully and ſolidly prov'd, that, *Tell it unto the Church*, ſignifies no more than Tell it unto the Magiſtrate of thy People (or who is of the ſame Religion with thy ſelf) before you implead your Brother in the Heathen Courts, as St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 5. hath incomparably expounded it; where he commands them for this cauſe to chuſe perſons out of themſelves to judge and arbitrate their Quarrels. But now who doubts but that this Precept holds not, where God hath bleſſed us with a pious *Chriſtian* Magiſtracy, a Magiſtracy of the ſame Religion with our ſelves? Indeed St. *Auguſtine*, in the ſecond Chapter of Faith and Works, plainly enough informs us, that he accounted Excommunication ſupplied the place and defect of the viſible Sword, when the Church wanted that *external aid:* for, as he would have it, *Moſes* his puniſhing Tranſgreſſors with Death, and *Phineas* his ſlaying the Adulterers, did typifie and prefigure the puniſhing evil men by Degradations and Excommunications; that is, at ſuch time as the material Sword, *the Civil Temporal*

Power, ſhould be wanting in the Church. I remember that ſome Modern Writers hold, that the Jews had and retain'd this Cuſtom of Excommunicating, becauſe the Sword was taken from them; (which I have prov'd by irrefragable Reaſon, Argument, and Teſtimonies, to be utterly falſe:) but were it but thus far true, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that there's no occaſion for Excommunication in ſuch a Church which hath the Civil Authority of its ſide: Nor is it requir'd as a thing obligatory to us, to chuſe Judges or Arbitrators, other than the lawful Judicatures of the Land. *Be it how it will*, nothing can be more certain, than that the word Church in this paſſage of *Matthew* ſignifies nothing leſs than a Church-Senate, a Council of *Clergie-men or* Eccleſiaſticks, endowed with a Faculty, a Right or Power to ſhut out *whom they pleaſe* from the Sacraments.

LIII. Two Objections yet remain: *Firſt*, How any one can be ſaid to neglect to hear the Church, if that and the Civil Magiſtrate, who hath the power of the Sword, are the ſame thing? *Secondly*, How that paſſage of binding and looſing, *Mat.* 18. *v.* 18. ſuits with this matter? To the firſt, the Anſwer is intimated before, That the Jews had not then power of judging in all matters, but almoſt every thing that related not to Religion, belong'd to the Roman Judicatures: And therefore Chriſt permits, that if any one neglects or contemns the Authority of the Sanedrim in ſuch matters, the injur'd perſon may proſecute his Right before the Heathen Magiſtrate; in like manner as if he were to ſue an Heathen or Publican. Beſides, many caſes may occur, which the Law had not provided a diſtinct *and proper* puniſhment for, or had not prohibited under any penalty at all; in which caſe it may well be, that the Offender may be diſmiſt without more ado than a verbal *chiding or* admonition. Now if the Wrong Doer does not yet leave wronging him, the party injur'd may

ſeek

ſeek farther ſatisfaction, and may again and again apply himſelf to the Church or Magiſtrate to puniſh the other's obſtinacy: But though this Anſwer hold true, yet the former ſeems, in my mind, more appoſite and ſuitable to the purpoſe and deſigne of Chriſt, as well as to the ſeveral circumſtances of time and place, and the like.

LIV. To the ſecond, there is as little difficulty in framing it an Anſwer: for ſince the manner of ſpeaking is the ſame, and almoſt the ſelf-ſame words are here repeated which are uſed by Chriſt, *Mat.* 16. 19. 'tis neceſſary that they ſignifie either the ſame thing, or ſomething very like it; but in *Mat.* 16. 19. to bind and to looſe ſignifies nothing elſe but to preach the Goſpel; whereby he that believes in it, is looſed from Sin and from Death: and therefore can ſignifie here no more than the deſiring his Brother to leave injuring him, and rather to become good and affectionate to him; this being a thing acceptable unto God, and he will ſurely puniſh thoſe that break this great Commandment *of Love and Charity.* *Now* he that thus wins upon his Brother by ſoft advice and entreaties to forbear wronging him, and urging to him the *revealed* Will of God, and what Wrath he has in ſtore for them that thus offend; if his Admonitions have their effect, he hath gained his Brother, that is, he hath looſed him: if they return unſucceſsful, *he is ſtill bound*, the Wrath of God remains upon him, in like manner as it doth upon him who having heard the Word of the Goſpel preached unto him, believes or diſbelieves it. But now that we might be ready and forward to forgive them that repent, Chriſt labour'd to perſwade us to it by that moſt appoſite Parable of *the Kings taking account of his ſervants, which he ſubjoyn'd to their paſſage*; whereby Chriſt's meaning and purpoſe is mightily cleared, *as to the ſence we have put upon it before.*

LV. I cannot but infinitely wonder, how or why ſome

men do here expound this binding or loosing by driving men from the Sacraments, and readmitting them thither again, when throughout the whole Bible these words are never put for any such matter, and the Apostles have neither by word or otherwise discover'd that they understood Christ in such a sence. There is extant a Precept of Christ, that if any refused to receive the Gospel, they should depart out of that house or City, shaking off the dust of their feet against them, *Luke* 10. 11. *Mat.* 10. 14. which they put in practice, *Acts* 13. 25. and 18. 6. But that they should deny any Sacrament to those that believed the Word, and were baptized unto Christ, and embraced his Religion and Doctrine, we nowhere find it either enjoyned unto, or practised by them, as hath been before abundantly and firmly proved. But it may suffice at present to inform *the World*, that it can never be made out by Holy Writ, that Binding is put for Excluding Believers from receiving the Sacrament; or Loosing to signifie a Readmission again of him who had been for his sins *and contumacies* debarr'd, and thus to re-engraft him as'twere into the Church anew.

LVI. Thus have I firmly and truly prov'd, that Christ in *Mat.* 18. 19. treats not of Exclusion from Sacraments, but of the charitable management and composure of private Injuries between *fellow-brethren, men professing the same Faith.* But others have seen this before, as well as I; as St. *Augustine* in his sixteenth Sermon upon St. *Matthew*; and *Theophylact*, who (as no body can otherwise doubt) borrowed this Opinion (as almost all he says besides) from *Chrysostom.* Among the more modern Divines, *D. Johannes Brentius* writes many things in his Comments upon this Chapter, very agreeable to what we have said.

LVII. 'Tis now requisite that I should shew that the action of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 3, *&c.* is nothing of kin to this Excom-

Excommunication. *First*, That Apoſtle appears to have been a ſtrict obſerver of the Moſaick Law; againſt which (as he anſwers for himſelf, *Acts* 25. 8.) he had not at all offended: And, *Acts* 18. 18. and 21. *v.* 24, 26. it appears, that he with other of the Apoſtles, complied with the Ceremonies of the Law, *and bore the Jews company in keeping them*; and was ill ſpoken of by the *Convert* Jews, not for teaching the Gentiles that the obſervation of the Law was not requir'd of them, but for teaching the Jews which were among the Gentiles to forſake *Moſes*, &c. whereas all the believing Jews that were in *Judea*, kept *and were zealous of* the Law, *v.* 20. But who knows not that Chriſt changed not the Law of *Moſes* in that point of celebrating the Paſſover, which commands all to come who were circumciſed? and therefore neither doth he keep back that inceſtuous perſon, nor any other, from communicating at the Lords Table, who would come and profeſs the Chriſtian Faith. As to the Jews, 'tis a plain caſe, who would never have ſuffer'd ſuch an Encroachment upon their Law, and their *conſtant* inveterate uſage *to the contrary*: And who can well think that the Gentiles ſhould be in worſe circumſtances *than they*, as to this purpoſe?

LVIII. *But again*, if the delivery to Satan was no more than a bare interdiction from the Sacraments till *his* repentance, why did *Paul* excuſe himſelf to the *Corinthians* with all that care and niceneſs? Why did he ſo near repent him, as 'twere, of what he had done? (as we read he did, 2 *Cor.* 2. 4. and 7. *v.* 8.) Beſides, why were the *Corinthians* ſo overwhelm'd with grief, if they already knew this to be the method and practice of the Church in puniſhing ſinners, and that this was to be a laſting Diſcipline *for all ſucceſſions of Ages*? they ſhould rather, methinks, have rejoyced that they had ſuch a Preſident and Pattern given them to walk by for the future. If it were

but

but a ſpur to Repentance, and an wholſome and ſafe Antidote againſt Damnation, why did their ſorrows run ſo high? why were they not rather rejoyced? Chriſt tells us, that the Angels of God rejoyce more over the Converſion of one Sinner, than over ninety nine juſt perſons. The *Corinthians* therefore could not have had the Spirit of Chriſt in them, had they conceiv'd ſuch mighty ſorrow on ſeeing the Apoſtle do this and no more, and barely to recal an erring Brother into the right way again, and ſave him from that damnation he was pulling down upon his own head: But who can *be ſo blind as* not *to* ſee that the Apoſtle ſtruck deeper than this comes to?

Thirdly, What need had the Apoſtle to write *to them*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 8. that he does not repent, though he did repent? or how indeed could he any ways repent him of what he had done, if his purpoſe was to have it put *dayly* in practice every where, and in all Churches? or if it were but a Temporary Seclusion from the Sacrament, and at longeſt but till his repentance?

Fourthly, What occaſion was there that the *Corinthians* ſhould uſe ſuch earneſt and powerful Interceſſions with the Apoſtle on that Wretch's behalf, if they knew that upon his repentance he ſhould ſtraitway be admitted into their Fellowſhip again? But that they did earneſtly entreat for him, 'tis evident from the Apoſtles words, 2 *Cor.* 2. 10. *To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive alſo: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your ſake forgave I it in the preſence of Chriſt.*

Fifthly, We find *Paul* in that ſecond Chapter, *v.* 9. excuſing himſelf, that one of his aims was to know the proof of their Obedience; And in the ſeventh Chapter, *v.* 12. he tells them, he did it *that his care for them in the ſight of God, might appear to them.* How could he have ſaid or writ thus, if he had commanded them no greater a matter than that they ſhould turn away ſuch a one from the Sacrament?

Sixthly,

Sixthly, How ſhall we ever make theſe words hang together, *Ye were made ſorry in a godly manner (or with reſpect to God) that ye might receive damage by us in nothing?* 2 Cor. 7. 9. He tells them, they ſuffer'd no loſs, damage, or detriment by that ſorrow of theirs, for that their grief had been prevalent with him for the pardoning that unhappy Wretch: without this they had received loſs, even the loſs of that *inceſtuous* perſon. But pray what loſs had it been to them, if he had been onely to be kept from the Sacrament till he repented?

Seventhly, *Paul* ſpeaks not there of the Lords Supper, but of the whole Life of a Chriſtian; and therefore his meaning muſt be, not to put him away from the Table of the Lord, but from among them, *that is, out of the world*, that that little Leaven might not vitiate the whole Maſs. This is ſuitable to the Apoſtles phraſe, and to the Figure of Leaven; but Excommunication cannot be eaſily accommodated either to his or *Moſes's* words.

Eighthly, It muſt be obſerv'd, that he doth not ſay ſimply, that they *themſelves, and they onely*, when they are gathered together in the Name of the Lord, or according to Chriſts command, ſhould deliver him to Satan, or deprive him of the Sacrament; but, *I verily, as abſent in body, but preſent in ſpirit, have judged already as though I were preſent, concerning him that hath ſo done this deed, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when ye are gathered together, and my ſpirit, with the power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to deliver ſuch an one to Satan*, &c. Plainly intimating, that the power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was neceſſary to intervene in this buſineſs; and therefore was a matter of greater moment than a Temporary Amotion from the Sacrament: Beſides, he ſays, that he himſelf had already judged (though (perhaps by reaſon of his abſence) he determin'd not to do it without them) he doth not command the Church that they by themſelves ſhould

do

do this, as if this were purely an Apoſtolical, not an Eccleſiaſtical Power; *an authority annexed to the perſons of the Apoſtles, and not to any Church or other Order or Succeſſion of men:* which are conſiderations not to be ſlurr'd over with ſlight and contempt.

Laſtly, We do not any-where read that the Apoſtle commanded any ſingle perſon, or number of men, to deliver any one to Satan for the deſtruction of the Fleſh, either whilſt he lived, or when he ſhould be dead and gone; well knowing, that this was appropriated to his Apoſtolick Power, and *not to be delegated*, not to be agreeable to any other *or leſs Authority:* for as they had the Power of Healing, ſo had they that of Wounding too, as appears, *Acts* 5.5,10. and 13.11. for which reaſon we read not of any ordained by the Apoſtles, that are commanded to exerciſe this Extraordinary Power. And therefore the Apoſtle is ever and anon threatning them with his coming in power; with his being ſharp and ſevere upon them; with his dealing with them according to the power given him by God; with his coming to them with a Rod, *and the like:* and commands to note thoſe by Epiſtle that offend. This is not a thing given in charge to the Elders; that it may be without all controverſie, that this Power was granted to the Apoſtles, and to none elſe. Of the ſame import is that which we read, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. of *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, whom *Paul* (not the Church, nor the Preſbyters, nor any other perſons whatſoever) delivered unto Satan.

LIX. I have hitherto, by way of Argument, and from Circumſtances, clearly evinced, that 'twas a thing of a quite different nature, to deliver to Satan, and to ſhut out from the Sacrament. Now proceed I to demonſtrate the ſame truth from the words themſelves, and the propriety, *tendency* and nature of that whole paſſage: *for*,

Firſt, The Apoſtle does not ſay, Why did ye not interdict

dict this inceſtuous perſon the Lords Supper? but why have ye not mourned, 1 *Cor.* 5. 2. that is, why have ye not by Mourning and Prayers put up to God, *beſought* that he that hath done this deed, might be taken away from among you, *what way God ſhall beſt pleaſe?* St. *Auguſtine* in his third book againſt *Parmen.* explains the place to the ſame ſence; and the ſame way doth he expound what the Apoſtle, *ch.* 12. hath written of ſorrowing. They alſo ſeem to be of St. *Auguſtine*'s and Truth's ſide too, who ſuppoſe the Apoſtle to allude to 1 *King.* 21. & 9, & 12. From whence we *may* conjecture it to have been an ancient Cuſtom among the Jews, to make inquiſition after enormous crimes, by faſting, Prayers, and publick mourning, that the ſame, when detected, might be brought to condign puniſhments as the Law requir'd. Therefore at that time when the Church was deſtitute of the Civil Authority, he admoniſhes them that they ought to addreſs to God that he would (as might ſeem beſt to him) take him out of the way; which was a quite different thing from that which we call excommunicating a man. But beſides, by what competent Author can it be made out, that ἐξαρθῆναι ἐκ μέσου τινός, *To take away from among men*, ſhould be a phraſe for debarring a man *acceſs to* the Sacrament? In propriety of ſpeech he is ſaid *è medio ſublatus*, to be taken away from among men, who is *any ways* kill'd: for though a baniſhed *or exil'd* perſon may in ſome ſence be ſaid to be driven away from among others, yet in propriety of ſpeech, and as the Greeks commonly uſe it, 'tis not ſo taken by them, at leaſtwiſe 'tis not to be found in that ſence in Holy Writ.

Secondly, But if the Apoſtles direction here be to have him *diſcommon'd and* thruſt out of the Fellowſhip and Converſe of the Faithful, what need was there of publick mourning? he ſhould have been *turn'd over and* baniſht to the Gentiles. But that's not conſiſtent with that other

Clauſe, That his Soul may be ſaved; which (*at leaſt on our Adverſaries principles*) could never be out of *the pale of* the Church. If you ſay he was onely debarr'd and removed from the Sacrament and private Commerce, he was not then *è medio eorum ſublatus*; *he was not taken away from among them:* for I do not think any man able to make it out, that the Apoſtle order'd him to be kept from the Sacrament alone, and from private Converſation, Familiarity, and Fellowſhip with them. This then is a mere addition, a forc'd ſence upon the Apoſtles words, which cannot be prov'd ever to have enter'd into his thoughts. Truly I think that no man (who is vers'd in Scripture, and the moſt ancient Expoſitors of it) can doubt, but that the Apoſtle borrowed this paſſage, and the very words that he expreſſeth himſelf in, from *Deut.* 17. 10. *ch.* 19. 20. *ch.* 21. 7. *ch.* 22. 6, 11. *ch.* 24. 8. where *Moſes* puts the words for cutting off the Offender by death, and for nothing elſe; and in all the alleadged places, *Moſes* keeps to the ſelf-ſame words; Whereas in *ch.* 13. he puts ἐξαρῶν for ἀφανιῶν, but both in the ſame ſence. How is it therefore poſſible that ἐξαρῶν ἐκ μέσου, here ſhould bear ſuch a conſtruction, *viz.* to excommunicate, (as Excommunication now-a-days ſignifies?)

Thirdly, The Context ſeems to prove that this Offender did not perſiſt in that *piece of* Wickedneſs: for in *v.* 2 & 3. of that fifth Chapter, 'tis, *him that hath done this deed*; which ſhews he had, not that he then did, do it. The Apoſtle therefore ſeems to deſigne the puniſhing him for the Fact that he had committed, agreeable to the Command of God, and to the Practice of every good Magiſtrate: And indeed when he ſays, *v.* 4. *That the Spirit may be ſaved*, &c. he ſeems to have been inform'd of his penitence: for how could he otherwiſe have written thus of a man who had given no proof how his Soul was touch'd for ſo enormous a Wickedneſs?

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The Apoſtle tells them, he had determin'd or *judg'd already to deliver ſuch an one unto Satan, for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.* Are we to ſeek for the ſignification of the word παραδίδωμι? In what prophane Author, or in what place of Scripture, hath it a different ſence from what 'tis here taken in, of giving, giving up, delivering, permitting, yielding, *and the like?* And here we have, firſt, the perſon giving him up, and the perſon to whom he was ſo given, and he that was given: Nay, 'tis over and above added, why and for what purpoſe he was deliver'd up. And as to the *form of* ſpeech, 'tis juſt as if I ſhould ſay, I deliver *over* my Son to *his* Maſter, *or I put him into ſuch a Maſters hands*, for Inſtruction, or for Diſcipline. Who that ſhould hear a man ſpeak ſo, would not think that he put his Son into the Maſters power, to be inſtructed or corrected by him? He that would have inſtances of this nature, let him turn to 1 *Tim.* 1.19. *Acts* 27.24. *Mat.*5.25. and *ch.* 18.34. and *ch.* 27. 2. *Mark* 13. 9. *John* 19. 16. and that of *Mat.* 24. 9. they ſhall deliver you up to be afflicted, is directly parallel: So *Mark* 13. 12. the Brother παραδώσει ſhall deliver up (*or as we render it, ſhall betray*) the Brother to death. So 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. ſpeaking of the Angels that ſinned, he ſays, that God deliver'd them *into chains of darkneſs* to be reſerv'd unto Judgment. In *Job* 2. 6. God ſays unto Satan, Behold, παραδίδωμί σοι αὐτὸν, I have deliver'd him to thee, *or as we render it, he is in thine hand*, onely ſave his life. Do not all theſe places tell us of a delivering up to be afflicted, to be killed, to be condemned, and the like? In ſhort, none ſhall to the worlds end, be able to ſhew that ever this kind of phraſe is uſed to ſignifie the excluding one from the Sacrament, unleſs the deſtruction of the Fleſh *here*, and interdicting the Sacrament be the ſame.

Fifthly, 'Tis impoſſible to ſhew that this word, παρα-

deſtruction, is any where in the New Teſtament put for mortifying the Luſts of the Fleſh; but where-ever 'tis found, 'tis put for the death of the Soul or Body (whether the word Fleſh be joyn'd with it or not). I might alſo ſay, that no extant Greek Author hath uſed it to that ſence that ſome, as I have ſaid, put upon it; but we keep to its acceptance in Scripture. The Apoſtle makes uſe of it in 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 3. and 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 9. and in 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. and the Verbal ὀλεθρονὸν, we read in 1 *Cor.* 10. 10. as the Participle ὀλεθρεύων in *Heb.* 11. *v.* 28. and the Compound ἐξολεθρευθήσεται, *Acts* 3. 23. taken *by that holy Pen-man* out of *Deut.* 18. 15. But in all theſe places Death and Deſtruction are thereby ſignified. The Septuagint do ordinarily uſe ἐξολεθρεύω, which *Pagninus* generally renders *exſcindo*, to cut off, or ſlay: 'tis certain they always mean Death by it. I know that which the Apoſtle θανατόω, *Rom.* 8. 13. and νεκρόω. *Col.* 2. 3. and *Gal.* 5. 12. and 6. 14. are put for mortification of the Fleſhly Luſts. But for θάνατος and ὀλεθρος, they are not met with in that ſence either in ſacred or profane Authors; nor in truth do I remember my ſelf to have read that θάνατος in the New Teſtament is ſo taken. 'Tis therefore a poor Evaſion that ſome frame, ſuppoſing *Paul* here to diſtinguiſh betwixt the affections of the Fleſh and the Spirit: Since he here ſets the Deſtruction of the Fleſh, or, *which is all one*, the Death of the Body, againſt the ſaving of the Soul or Spirit; as both the genuine ſence of the words, the drift and purpoſe of *Paul*, the *whole* ſeries and circumſtances of the Diſcourſe, and the very word παραδοῦναι, *to deliver*, ſo unqueſtionably demonſtrate, that any lover of Truth can't but ſit down ſatisfied under the proof of it. But,

Sixthly, The following words, *That the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus*, that is, in the day of Judgment, give farther teſtimony *to the truth of this Interpretation*, and are a convincing demonſtration, that the Apoſtle

ſtle ſpeaks of this wicked one, as of one whoſe death was at hand.

Seventhly and laſtly, The word ἐπιτιμία, 2 *Cor.* 2. *v.* 6. (*which we tranſlate Puniſhment, but ought rather to be rendered Cenſure*) argues he was not expuls'd from the Sacrament: for in its primitive ſignification 'tis put for Chiding, Cenſuring, Reproving, or Rebuking, *and the like*, (as Interpreters commonly tranſlate it) not for Puniſhment, Mulct, *or Penance.* There are yet two more Reaſons left us; the one, That the Interdicting from the Sacrament is nowhere in Scripture put for *or ordained to be* Puniſhment. The other, that the words themſelves plainly ſhew, that 'tis here put for Chiding or Cenſure; which not one ſingle perſon alone, but many uſed towards him: for, ſays St. *Paul* there, ſufficient for ſuch an one is this ἐπιτιμία, this Cenſure (*not as we read it, Puniſhment*) which was inflicted of many. He abſolves him from nothing but thoſe Comminations and Threats which many, or *peradventure* the whole Church, *all the Corinthian Believers*, had denounced againſt him, That he ſhould be delivered over to Satan, to be by him *buffeted, tormented*, kill'd. He had yet therefore onely experienced their Threats: for *Paul* doth not abſolve him of part, but of all *that had as yet befallen him*; and, as he ſays, this Cenſure, *theſe Threats and Ratlings that had been rounded in his ears*, were ſufficient. Nay, he *plainly* intimates withal, that this was all that was done to him. We read of this word ἐπιτιμία, *Mat.* 16.22.*ch.* 17.18.*ch.* 19.13.*ch.* 20.13. and in the other Evangeliſts; as alſo 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. (where ἔλεγξον and παρακάλεσον, *bear it company:*) In all which places 'tis put for Reproof and Rebuking, or the like; but nowhere for Puniſhment.

LX. But here now it may be aſkt me, If the inceſtuous perſon underwent no more than this ἐπιτιμία, this Cenſure or Rebuke, how can he be ſaid to have been deliver'd unto

to Satan, to be tormented and ſlain by him? Some of the ancient *Writers* hold, that he was indeed deliver'd *over* to be tormented with Diſeaſes, or the like, and ſo be gradually brought to deſtruction; but was releaſed and abſolv'd again by the Apoſtle, before it had gone ſo far. If this Anſwer be true, I ſee not but ὄλεθρος might here ſignifie Puniſhment, (*as indeed our Tranſlation has rendered it.*) But now though I do not deny but that this is a paſſible Interpretation, yet I ſhall preſent you another as ſuitable to the Apoſtles words: St. *Paul* had not reſolved to deliver this man to the Devil by himſelf alone, but had rather have it done *in a full Congregation*, when the whole Body of Believers ſhould be gather'd together for that purpoſe. But when once the Church ſaw this deplorable Creature ſo dejected and overwhelm'd with Sorrow, and that Grief had almoſt already given him the Death that they threatned, they *reprieved him as 'twere, and* deferr'd pronouncing the Sentence, till they might learn the Apoſtles pleaſure, whether at their interceſſion he would remit the rigour of it, and reſtore him on his Repentance: which if they could not prevail with him to do, they threaten they will not longer be wanting in their Duty. Thus came it to paſs that this poor Soul remain'd for ſome months under great Terrors and Agonies of mind, till he had receiv'd the joyful intelligence of *Paul*'s remitting the Puniſhment. That the matter was manag'd much after this rate, may be plainly collected out of that ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*.

LXI. From what has been already alleadg'd, as well as from what might yet be urg'd, 'tis ſo clearly and ſolidly demonſtrated, that this delivering *up* to Satan was quite another thing from that which we now-a-days call Excommunication, or Suſpenſion from the Sacrament, that ſure none but thoſe who are as defective in underſtanding, as in love to the Truth, can have the face to deny it. I

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ſaid juſt now, that ſome ancient Writers expounded this place as we do: *Auguſtine* (whoſe Teſtimony I cited before) is one of them; there is another paſſage of his in his firſt Book, upon Chriſt's Sermon in the Mount, concurring with us; as doth alſo *Athanaſius*, and after him *Chryſoſtom*, and his Compiler *Theophylact*.

LXII. Let us now take a ſhort ſurvey of thoſe other places, which our Opponents flie unto for their own defence. Some lay a ſtreſs upon that paſſage of St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, eſpecially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine:* for hereby they fancy themſelves able to ſqueeze out a proof that there were ſome Elders who did not *labour in the Word*; and on theſe they beſtow another Office, to wit, that of inſpecting and cenſuring our Manners and Behaviour, of being Obſervators of our ſins and failings, of admoniſhing the Stubborn and Refractory, of certifying their fellow-Elders, that is (*ſay they*) the Church; and laſtly, (in conjunction with theſe) of excommunicating ſuch as hear not (*or obey not*) the Church.

LXIII. But we think it evident from the Writings of the Apoſtles *Peter* and *Paul*, that Miniſters, Biſhops, and Preſbyters or Elders (if Office, Function, and Miniſtry be meant by thoſe two laſt, and not their Age) were all the ſame in the Apoſtles time; and ſo that there was no Preſbyter who was not a Teacher (*or Preacher*, as we now call them) *that is, who did not labour in the Doctrine:* unleſs any are deſirous to ſtretch this word to thoſe Judges and Arbitrators of Suits and Controverſies mentioned 1 *Cor.* 6. 4. (But we talk not of them at preſent, ſince their Duty was of a quite different nature.) This Opinion of ours, which we think grounded upon apparent truth, hath both *Hierom* and *Ambroſe* to vouch for it: onely this latter ſays that Biſhops were firſt nominated out of the Order of

Hieronym. upon *Tit.* chap. 1.

Preſ-

Presbyters. This therefore is the manner of *Paul's* Discourſing; as if I ſhould ſay, I love all Miniſters and Paſtors, but eſpecially thoſe who with unwearied Induſtry, and a conſtant waking Care and Sedulity, feed the Sheep committed to their charge. I love all ſtudious perſons, but eſpecially thoſe who ſit to it night and day. I do not now by ſaying thus, ſay that there are ſome Paſtors who never feed their Sheep, or ſome Students who never ſtudy; but I ſuppoſe thereby ſome more diligent than others, though I do not ſay that any do more than they ought to do, or than their Function requires of them. That this is the genuine *and true* Expoſition of the Apoſtles meaning and words, the ſubſequent words, *v.* 18. concerning the reward, proves it: for 'tis in no ſort probable that the ſame reward was at any time allotted in the Church to them that did, and to them that did not teach; for the firſt ſhould be charg'd with a double Duty, and the other with but a ſingle one: yet the Apoſtle ſtiles them both worthy of double honour. Beſides, the Apoſtle quotes that paſſage of the Ox treading out the Corn, to prove that Suſtenance is due to the Miniſtry: and the Participle κοπῶντι confirms *our Expoſition*; which ſignifies not barely labouring, but wearying our ſelves with labour, or uſing an extraordinary diligence therein: And thus is it always taken in the * New Teſtament, where it often occurs. And the Greeks call that κόπος, which the Latins call *Laſſitudo*, Wearineſs: And as ἔργον, κόπος and πόνος differ, ſo do their Verbs.

* *See* Mat. 11. 28. Luke 5. 5. Joh 4. 6. 1 Cor. 4. 12. Eph. 4. 28. 1 Theſſ 5. 12. *which helps mightily to the explaining this.* 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 1 Cor. 15. 58. *& alibi.*

LXIV. They ſay withal, that Chriſt did forbid *to caſt Pearls before Swine, and to give things that are holy, unto Dogs.* I anſwer, Chriſt ſpeaks of them that deſpiſe *thoſe* Pearls, and tread them under their feet, and turn again and rend the Donors of them; that is, he ſpeaks of the Enemies

mies of the Goſpel, with whom we have nothing to *do in this diſpute*: for we meddle not with any here, but Chriſtians, who are rightly principl'd in that Doctrine, and approve the ſame, and are deſirous to be Partakers of the Sacraments with their fellow-Chriſtians, though they live not up to that Integrity that others do. Beſides, Chriſt ſpeaks not there of Sacraments, but of the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which ought not to be offer'd to Dogs and Swine, that is, to ſuch as refuſe and trample it under feet; of which nature is that Parable of the Pearl, *Mat.* 13. 45. where Chriſt likens the Kingdom of Heaven to a Merchant-man who bought a Pearl of great price; and therefore it makes nothing to our purpoſe.

LXV. Whereas again they remember us that St. *Paul* gave it in charge to *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 29. *That them that ſin he ſhould rebuke before all*; We deny not the thing, but *deny* that it relates to our purpoſe. I will not muſter up multitudes of Arguments to prove it; this onely ſhall I ſay, That 'tis beyond the wit of man to make it out, that to reprove or rebuke any man before or in the preſence of the Church, is the ſame thing with forbidding him the Sacrament. Nay, they that object this, object it to no purpoſe, unleſs they can ſhew it to be the ſame: Who can prove that the Apoſtle ſo much as thought here of interdicting the Sacrament? Again, the Apoſtle treats not here of ſins that are committed openly, and in the face of the world, but thoſe that ſin (ſays he) that *is*, that perſevere & continue in ſin, rebuke before all, that thereby both he that hath ſinned, and others *that ſaw it*, may fear with him, and do no more wickedly. He puts no diſtinction here between little and great, *venial and moral* ſins; much leſs between publick and private ſins. To ſpeak once for all, 'tis a leaden Objection, and will melt away like wax at the Fire of Truth, and vaniſh like the ſmoak. Beſides, St. *Paul's* words ſtand in perfect oppoſi-

tion to this Excommengent: for he commands him that ſins to be rebuk'd (not to be excommunicated) before all, ſubjoyning it as a reaſon, that all may fear; as if he ſhould ſay, If he will not repent and mend himſelf, at leaſt others ſhall thereby learn to be and do better. Where by *him that ſins* is not meant him that has left ſinning, *or him that had ſinned onely*, but him that abides and continues *to walk* in *the ways of* ſin, and repented not after admonitions and warnings given him: Him, I ſay, that *thus* ſins, he charges *Timothy* to rebuke and reprove before others; he does not give it in charge to him, to ſee him excommunicated.

LXVI. Next, ſay they, the Apoſtle commands ſo far to avoid the company of the Wicked, that he allows not the liberty of making our common Meals with them, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. *With ſuch an one no not to eat*; much leſs (conclude they) would he have us eat the Lords Supper with them. But I utterly deny the conſequence: for ſurely they are of very different import, the prohibition of private familiarities, and the non-admiſſion to the Sacrament; and the forbidding the one, is not a denial *or diſallowance* of the other; the former is a Civil *or Political* Puniſhment, the latter Sacred; we have a Command for one, none for the other; St. *Paul* explains the end and reaſon of the former, but we find no mention of either for the latter: nay, the thing it ſelf is nowhere enjoyn'd, or ſo much as the name *of Excommunication* once heard of in Scripture. And that one may be without the other, the Phariſees are a pregnant inſtance; who, that they might paſs with the World for the greater Saints, would not approach the Publicans, would not eat, drink, or aſſociate with them in the common concerns of Life. (I can't at preſent recollect that I have read of the like *Niceneſs* in any others;) but no man can ſhew me, whilſt the World laſts, that theſe Publicans were denied admiſſion to the Sacrifices, to the Temple,

Temple, to the Paſſover, or *any* other Sacraments, provided they were *but* circumcis'd, and turn'd not Renegades to their Religion. There are at this day ſome who ſhut out all notoriouſly lewd and diſſolute perſons out of their company; they will not live, nor entertain a Converſation with them: which evinces, that this avoiding their Company, *and maintaining* no Correſpondencies with them, is rather a Civil than an Eccleſiaſtical Puniſhment, and amounts not near to that of delivering over to Satan, which ſome will needs have to be Excommunication. The Apoſtle directs Good men to ſhun *all* Conſortſhip with Ill, that Shame may haſten in them a Repentance: The Interdiction runs not to the Ill, that they ſhall not live among the Good, if any good men would give them admittance. In private Converſations men talk of all matters indifferently; and if a diſſolute Wretch find by the freedom of his acceſs, that for all his Debaucheries he is as much made of as ever, not onely himſelf is not amended, but his Company by degrees endanger'd: But where a man ſees himſelf avoided, and that all ſhrink, flie, *and deteſt* his ſociety, he can't but caſt a reflecting thought upon the occaſion, and enter into conſiderations of a better life, that he be no longer the Scorn and Contempt of thoſe that before embrac'd him with all the arms of Friendſhip. And therefore as being debarr'd of private Commerce and Converſation, frights us from ſome ſorts of Crimes and Uncleanneſſes, ſo *the indulgence of* familiar *and fair outward* Correſpondencies, feeds, pampers, and encourages us in thoſe bad courſes. But theſe reaſons hold not in the receiving or being denied the Sacrament; for frequent Communicating at that Table, gives not vigour and nouriſhment to *our* Vices at the rate private *Communications and* Familiarities do: for in the Churches or Chappels where that is adminiſtred, no vain and worldly things, *nothing* of private concern, is then tranſacted, but the

Word of God *onely* is there handled. There, when men ſhall hear of a Chriſt that died for them, of a Chriſt that invites to that Commemoration, and publick demonſtration of our acknowledgments and thankfulneſs for ſo great a Benefit, and that none can be a worthy Communicant, who hath not throughly and ſincerely examin'd himſelf, and that thoſe who thruſt themſelves in unworthily amongſt his Gueſts, do but eat *and drink* damnation to themſelves: This will put men, that intend to approach unto the Lords Table, upon a ſeriouſneſs of thought, What is there exhibited; *what is his concern in it*; what God requires of him, and how he may for the future ſo regulate his life, that it may be acceptable in the ſight of God, how debauched ſoever and villanous it were before. He that has not theſe *offers, theſe incitements and* invitations, is depriv'd of theſe invitations, grows ſtill the worſe, *to be ſure*, no whit the better for it: which ſeems to be the reaſon of Gods inſtituting and enjoyning ſuch multitudes of Sacrifices, Offerings, Rites and Ceremonies. But for certain the Apoſtle has nowhere order'd, that they with whom he would not have good men to hold a Correſpondence, ſhould be alſo put by *or denied* the Sacrament. And when in another place, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 14. he writes to have them ſignifie that man by Epiſtle who walks diſorderly; *(for the Marginal tranſlation in our Engliſh Bibles ſeems to be trueſt in this place)* he does not *there* ſet the Elders upon excommunicating them, or ſuſpending them the Sacrament. All which are evident proofs of their miſtakes, who think Excommunication to have been either here approved, allowed of, or deſign'd by the Apoſtle.

LXVII. But to enforce the Objection, they tell us, 'tis no leſs unfit that the Church, *the Congregation of the Faithful aſſembled in the Worſhip of God*, ſhould be defil'd with the *Company and* Communion of the Wicked; and that 'tis

'tis therefore consequently necessary that the Evil should in all accounts be serv'd and kept from the *Pious and* Good. But I would return them this Answer: There is no danger that the Wicked should pollute *or injure* the Good in the use of those Rites and Ceremonies which are of God's own institution, whilst they take not after th em in their natures, nor learn not their immoralities: for neither the holy Prophets, Kings, or Judges, nor *John* the Baptist, nor even Christ himself, nor yet his Apostles after him, were ever defil'd by being present *at the same Worship*, at the same Sacrifices, in the same Temple, using the same *Rites and* Sacraments with men of the most debauched and profligate lives. Our Saviour was spotless amidst that Generation of Vipers, who were baptized with him by *John* in the same Baptism. *Judas* neither polluted Christ, nor the Apostles, nor the last Supper of our Lord, by his presence at it, though he was *then* a *known* Thief, and had before laid the Plot for betraying his Master, and had received the Pay for his pains. *Again*, the Apostle *Paul* does not bid us examine one another in the celebration or receiving of the Lords Supper, and to look about us whether any of the by-standers, *any of our fellow-Communicants, be sinful or unworthy*, be such as may derive any Pollution or Uncleanness to us; but thus runs his Commandment, 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. *Let a man examine himself; himself, he says*, not others.

LXVIII. Hitherto have I effectually and truly prov'd, that no circumcised person was ever (before Christ's days) prohibited those Ceremonies and Sacraments which God by the hand of *Moses* had ordain'd amongst them, upon any delinquency in Morals, or *Piety of* Life: Nay, I have withal shewn, that 'twas not lawful for any one whomsoever to forbid them; and I have by pregnant Testimonies from Scripture and Reason, made it out, that neither Christ nor his Apostles taught or acted contrary. Besides,

ſides, *I think* I have demonſtrated, that what our Adverſaries offer on their own behalfs, cannot maintain the Opinion they would build on it. So that now I ſee not any farther rubs, nothing that can ſhock this Concluſion; That that Excommunication which ſhuts out Chriſtians from the Sacrament for pure Immoralities, and the Vitiouſneſs of their lives, was never ordained by God, but is a Figment and Invention of men: for ſo far is it from deriving its original from Scripture, that *the invention and trick of* it is rather declaim'd againſt and condemn'd there.

LXIX. If any yet reply, that at this rate we beſpatter, we condemn whole ſhoals of pious Biſhops, who quickly after the Apoſtles times began this excommunicating Sinners; I muſt tell them, 'tis one thing to ſpeak againſt an Opinion, and another againſt the Aſſertors or Authors of it. Many in our Age, of no leſs Piety than Learning, have examin'd, have ſifted and confuted ſundry ancient (and as I may ſay) Catholick Errours, *Errours that crept early into the Church: As for inſtance*, the Limbus Patrum, Purgatory, Praying to Saints, Exorciſms in Baptiſm, Cœlibacy of the Prieſthood, Unctions in Baptiſm and *at the point of* Death, Prayers for the Dead, and Satisfaction in the Caſe now in queſtion; and yet I know not any man that has it charg'd on him as a Crime, barely for that he hereby condemns his Predeceſſors. If men will needs labour to enforce this Excommunication upon the Churches, as a Law of Gods promulgation, I can never be brought to commend it *therefore*; though at the ſame time I cannot but highly praiſe and approve of their Zeal and good Intentions, *who firſt gave riſe to it:* for their aim was hereby to curb the reſtiff and unweildy humours of vitious men, ſince they could not imagine a more commodious *and effectual* way of doing it: And very many (as we ſee even to this day) walk on in this beaten and publick Path, *do it becauſe others before them did it*, having never

never ſo much as taken it into their conſiderations, whether it be a matter that ſtands with holy Scripture *or no.*

LXX. I cannot at preſent ſay much of the very time when Excommunication had its firſt riſe; onely that towards the latter end of the ſecond Century after Chriſt, I meet with ſomething like it then attempted and ſet up. For above one hundred and fifty years, I do not find any one ſuſpended, or put by from receiving the Sacrament, for unholineſs of life. They that are fuller vers'd in the Hiſtory and Writings of the Fathers, may perchance ſpeak better and clearer in this point. They that ſhall carefully peruſe what *Socrates* in his fifth book of *Eccleſ.* Hiſtory, *chap.* 19. has tranſmitted to us, I verily believe will, without much difficulty, confeſs with us that this Cuſtom of Excommunicating had its firſt Epoch or Commencement in the Church, about the time of *Novatus*: Yet *Sozomen*, in his ſeventh book, *chap.* 16. pretends other cauſes for its Inſtitution. Beſides *which*, we read that about the year of the Lord 200. *Victor* Biſhop of *Rome* admitted not to the Lords Supper them who refuſed to forgive Injuries; *but* I have obſerv'd, that till that time none were denied the Communion but Hereticks, and ſuch as ſwerv'd from *or renounced* the Chriſtian Faith. But be that how it will, this is both certain and evident, that Excommunication was *firſt* introduced into the Church for the reſtraint and puniſhment of Vice; and afterwards when the Church had got the Sword into their hand, *as well as the Keys at their girdle*; that is, when the Magiſtrates, *Kings and Princes*, became Chriſtian, *and ſubjected themſelves* to the Faith; yet did the Church-men not let go this power, but continued the exerciſe of it by their Biſhops: partly, for that the *Epiſcopal* Order was then believed to be *of* Divine *Right*; partly, for that they could not but be fond and tenacious of that Power which made them formidable

to

to Kings and Emperours, and was therefore a morſel too ſweet to be parted with without regret: And they eaſily wrought others into a belief of Chriſts being the Author and Inſtitutor of it, ſince themſelves had before ſo forwardly and ſo willingly ſwallowed it. Superſtition *too, in a little time*, had aſcribed ſo much virtue to the Sacrament, that it gave ſtrength to the Opinion; for 'twas believed, and publickly owned by their Writings, that there were ſome that could not die, till they had been houſell'd and received the Sacrament. Either therefore this Errour made men dread Excommunication, or Excommunication led them into the Errour: for how facile a thing was it to impoſe upon the Credulity of the illiterate and weak Vulgar, that Life was annext to the receiving, and Death to the deprivation of the holy Sacrament, ſince the denial of this to a ſinner, was the higheſt and laſt Puniſhment that they ſaw inflicted on him?

LXXI. But for the Perſons that executed and denounced this Excommunication (as far as our Conjectures can carry us in this affair) they ſeem to have been at firſt ſuch Elders as we read of 1 *Cor.* 6. 4. (who ſupplied the place and defect of Magiſtracy in the Church) together with the Miniſtry; but afterwards all this Authority was devolved upon the Biſhops, who took cognizance of all Suits, made up Differences, gave Judgment, and did every thing that related to the deciſions of Right, and diſtributing Juſtice betwixt man and man: as we perceive by the Hiſtory of thoſe times, and by St. *Auguſtine*'s complaining of ſo much then lying on the Biſhops hands of this nature. *Ambroſe* affirms, that thoſe *ſort of* Elders whoſe aſſiſtance was wont to be made uſe of in the Church on all occaſions, were in *vogue and* authority when yet they were deſtitute of Biſhops. And it appears by the Apoſtle, that thoſe *Elders* were to have an Authority as to that Employment *of Judging*, as long as the Church ſhould be under

under the preſſures of an Heathen Magiſtrate; which gives us to underſtand, that as under a Chriſtian Government that Employment *would be uſeleſs, and* was *therefore* to ceaſe; ſo Excommunication (upon ſuppoſition that they had exercis'd ſuch a thing before) yet ſhould it in a Chriſtian Kingdom ceaſe. For we muſt note, that theſe Elders were inſtead of *Civil* Magiſtrates, and manag'd Civil affairs, and were no Eccleſiaſtical Judicature: (which now-a-days is of a different nature from the Civil) for 'tis plainly ſaid, that they were to deal in Suits and Controverſies of Law, things relating to this Life and the Concerns of it.

LXXII. 'Twould make a Volume to recount what advantages the Church did hereby reap; moſt certainly they can't be ſet out in a ſmall compaſs: for firſt, this Excommunication made men to look for ſalvation from the Sacrament; for thus they fram'd the Argument: The Excluſion from the Sacrament draws down Death and Damnation (*ſay they*) therefore the Receiving of it gives Life. They ſcarce could entertain a doubt of the truth of the Antecedent, whilſt they were taught that this was ſo dreadful, ſo Soul-deſtructive a puniſhment; *and* when they thought themſelves, by being ſhut out from the Sacrament, to fall ſtraight into the very clutches of the Devil, and be wholly at Satan's mercy: which has made it thought by ſome, that they could not die, without being houſled, as I ſaid before. This Errour grew and got ſtrength from the many great and long Penances, the Solemnities of Abſolution, and the like; amongſt which, none was more prevalent, than that they would not adminiſter the holy Euchariſt to them, till the very point of Death; and that then they gave it them, 'twas *of pure compaſſion*, that they might not go hence deſtitute of the Souls neceſſary food: for if any (through whatever Accident) was ſo unfortunate, he was held for a man damn'd *and loſt to all Eternity*;

as if God would not forgive them their ſins who heartily and ſincerely repent, and vouchſafe unto them *everlaſting* life, unleſs theſe Elders ſhould adjudge them qualified for the Lords Supper. What errour is there of a more deteſtable and fatal conſequence? But another Fruit of this was, that all the World now began to believe that 'twas in the power of men to ſhut and open Heaven *when and* to whom they pleaſed: and therefore the younger *Theodoſius* would not eat his Dinner, becauſe having denied an importunate Monk's Requeſt, he ſtood excommunicate by him for his pains; and though the Biſhop of *Conſtantinople* told the Emperour that the Excommunication was invalid, yet reſt, good man, he *could not nor* would not, till the ſame hand abſolv'd, that had bound him. So *Ambroſe* for eight months together kept an Elder from Church, from Sermons, *and all the acts of publick Worſhip*: 'Tis true, offended he had, but more pardonably than *Ambroſe* himſelf, as any man, that has his eyes in his head, may ſee upon the peruſal of *Nicephorus* his Hiſtory, and the Chronicle of *Philip Melanchon*. By theſe ſteps has the Roman See encroached upon the Weſtern World, and made Princes, Kings, and Emperours to lacky to her Luſt, *and arbitrary ſway in pretended Spirituals*. Dyed has been the German Empire in the Gore of hundred thouſands that fell a Sacrifice *to this Roman Diana*, to excommunicating Popes, and excommunicated Emperours, Kings, and Princes. Religion ſhe has chopt and chang'd, mangled and disfigured, debaſed and vitiated, at her pleaſure; none daring to queſtion her Canons, diſpute her Decretals, *or look her Bulls in the face; the whole World were Caligula's, and durſt not ſhew their heads when ſhe ſent her Thunder of Excommunication abroad.* The God of Foxes ſpoken of by *Daniel*, *Dan.* 11. 38. (if we weigh that paſſage aright,) ſignifies nothing but this Excommunication, or the Prohibiting men the uſe of Sacred things, eſpecially the Lords

Supper

Supper: For this Excommunication acts a very God in earneſt; 'tis to this day a God of Forces, *a God* who has put all things, *all the power of Heaven and Hell*, under the Popes *feet*. And there are not wanting now-a-days too, another ſort of men *acting upon the ſame Principles*, who would make all *Humane Authority and the Civil Chriſtian* Magiſtrate, truckle to them, *and dread their Cenſures, as far as the Popes ignorant Votaries do his Bulls*. But I hope the time will come, when this God ſhall ſtand expos'd and condemn'd for a falſe and feigned God, and be ſtript of *all its God-like terror and dread, and* whatſoever may *or has ſo long* plagu'd and enſlav'd the Church. In fine, this *Idol Excommunication* had every where ſuch an Aſcendant, that 'twas the conſtant Belief of the World, that they who by *Church-Cenſures and* Interdictions from the Sacrament, *and publick acts of Worſhip*, were denounced unworthy of eternal Life, were thereby *wholly* fallen from divine Grace; as on the other hand, ſaved muſt they needs be, whom the Church *received and* would have ſo. Can we hope better terms, of greater moderation, from our Modern Churchmen, than the World has experienced in their Predeceſſors? *I fear* he that ſhould expect it, would find himſelf deceiv'd, and that he has but little weigh'd what either the Scriptures or Experience might inform him of.

LXXIII. I ſee no cauſe why Chriſtian Rulers ſhould not now-a-days do what God in the Jewiſh Commonwealth requir'd of the Civil Magiſtrate: Do we conceit that we can frame a better Model and Form of Diſcipline in Church or State, than God gave to them? *ſince* we read in *Deut.* 4. that the Nations for this ſhould praiſe and admire the People of *Iſrael* for their Wiſdom and Underſtanding, evinc'd by thoſe Statutes and Judgments which God had given them; yet God never taught them Excommunication: But the Power of puniſhing the Debaucheries, and reſtraining the looſeneſs and licentiouſneſs of man-

ners, was *wholly* in the Magistrate, whose duty 'twas, not onely to animadvert on such Crimes by the Rules that God had in their Law prescribed them; but the management of all the Externals of Religion, the Disciplinary part and Constitution, was in them. For 'twas not *Aaron*, but *Moses* that did this (God *still* commanding it); and we know this Jurisdiction was transferred over to *Joshua*, not to *Eleazar*; 'twas *Joshua* on whom God laid that Injunction of seeing the *Israelites* circumcis'd the second time, and not *Eleazar*, *Josh.* 5. 2. and this was to be *universal*, without exception of one man; the Bad were to be circumcis'd *as well as the Good*; and Bad there were, *without question:* And the keeping the Passover then was by him too directed; nor was any person, that we there read of, excluded from it for dishonesty of his life. The Ark of God was carried from place to place, as he gave the word; and in all things relating to Religion, he interpos'd his Commands, as may be observ'd throughout the whole book of *Joshua*. *Eli* and *Samuel*, who had the charge of Religious as well as Civil affairs, they offer'd *and administred at the Altar* as Priests; but as Judges they manag'd both Church and State: for 'twas lawful for the High Priests under the Old Testament, to meddle with *the arts of* Government *and Secular affairs*, as they were the Types of Christ our King and High Priest: but under the Gospel 'tis another case, *IT SHALL NOT BE SO WITH YOU*, says Christ. See 1 *Pet.* 5, 3. which is pertinent to our purpose.

LXXIV. If we go *farther* to the Kings, the case is no less plain: As to *David*, there's none can doubt it, since it appears that he order'd all the Offices and Charges *relating to God's Worship:* he that pleases may read, 1 *Chron.* from the 22th to the 27th Chapter. Then for *Solomon*, (who was a King and no Priest) he not onely built the Temple, but dedicated it. To the same purpose is that famous relation, 2 *Chron.* 19. of *Jehoshaphat*; which being

being well consider'd, gives great light to the matter in hand. So does that of the good King *Hezechia:* and indeed the whole Old Testament witnesses no less. If therefore the State and Church was founded, instituted, and establisht upon so much Wisdom; that which makes the neareſt approaches to the Form and Model thereof (as far as the present circumstances and *different* state of things will allow) challenges at least our Praises *and Approbation, if not our Imitation:* And therefore in whatever Nation the Civil Magistrate is Christian, Pious, *and Orthodox*, there's no need of other persons, who under another name or title should set a governing us, and *call us to account*, *or* punish us *for our misdeeds*, as if there were no difference betwixt a Believing and Infidel Prince. But (says *D. Wolfgangus Muſculus*, in his common places *de Magiſtratu*, from whom I have *borrowed and* transcribed what I said last) 'Tis a most pernicious Errour, and big with dangerous Consequence, that so many think no better of a Christian Magistracy, than of an Heathen one, whose power is to be allowed of no farther than meer Temporals. If then Believing Governours had authority not onely to interpose in the ordering religious matters, agreeable to Scripture-rules, and to regulate the Offices and other the Ministerial parts about it, (which is the reason that *Moſes* commands, that when they should chuse them a King, he should write him a Copy of the Law in a Book, and that to be with him, and he to read therein all the days of his life) but had also power to punish Vice in the same manner. 'Tis a needless fruitless attempt for men to be now-a-days contriving *and setting up* new Models of Government, which levels Magistrates themselves to the Rank and Condition of their Subjects: for this Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, in point of Manners, hath no place of Holy Writ to *vouch for it*, *or* set it up: not but that Civil Governours will do well to advise in all Doctrinals with those that *are learned and* have labour'd in the Word. LXXV. But

LXXV. But now in those Churches whose mishap 'tis to live under a Profane Government (as in the Dominions of Turks and Papists) they should make choice of pious sober persons, who (agreeable to St. *Paul*'s command) might arbitrate between contesting Members, might take up Quarrels, might do every thing of that nature; might chide and admonish debauched flagitious men, and *such of* the Ministry themselves *who walk disorderly*: and if this avail not, then might they punish them, or rather recal them to a better temper, by avoiding their company, by debarring them of private Commerce, by reprehending them publickly, or by some such-like marks of their displeasure: but to thrust them from that Sacrament which is of God's Institution, when they are minded to come, is more than any Church or man has a right to do; for none can judge of the Heart but God alone. It may chance that some sparks of Piety and Remorse may kindle *in a sinners Soul*, whilst he sits in the Assembly; which it can be no hurt (nay, may be greatly good) to cherish, since Religion forbids it not. And how can it be (I would fain ask) but horrid, absurd, and impious to boot, to turn away any man from publickly and solemnly paying his Thanks to God, and commemorating the Death of his Saviour, when he finds Impulses from within to do it, and would fain celebrate it with *his fellow-brethren* the Church, and declares 'tis his hearty desire to be and continue a Member of it, and that he would give publick testimony that his past life is irksom to himself.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

IT will not be amiss perhaps, by way of Corollary or Supplement, to mention the Decrees that were made in the year 1522. at the Diet at *Norimberg*, by all the Layety of the Imperial States, and were sent to the Bishop of *Rome*: for 'twill appear by that, that we are not the first who have started this Question, but that the Divines began to think of it nigh 46 years since. I am confident no man that is any whit vers'd in the German Affairs, can believe or imagine that any such thing should be enacted, but requested by them from the Bishop of *Rome*, without the Clergies knowing of it. But that *the Authority may be the more authentick, and* the thing clearer, I have been content to compare the German Copy which was writ at that Diet, with the Latine one sent to the Pope (and which *Matth. Flacc. Illyricus* caus'd to be reprinted at *Basil*, 1565. with his Book *De Sectis & Dissensionibus Papistarum*;) and upon comparing both, to publish the entire Decree or Act. Therefore among the 100 Grievances (which were fuller expres'd at *this Session at* Norimberg, than they had two years before at *Worms*,) this following is the 34th.

Item, Many Christians at *Rome*, and in other places besides, are by Archbishops, Bishops, and their Ecclesiastical Judges, excommunicated for Civil causes, and on a Temporal account; whereby many weak Consciences are disturb'd, and brought to despair: so that upon a money-score, and for the transitory things *of this life*, and very often, for very trivial causes, are some brought into danger of perishing Soul and Body too, contrary to the Law and

and Command of God, besides the losses they suffer in Estates and Reputation *thereby*: "Whereas no person "ought to be excommunicated, or held for such, unless "he be convict of Heresie, as the Holy Scripture bears "witness. And therefore the Lay-states of the Empire beseech your Pontifical Holiness, that as becomes a godly and religious Father, you would take away these Grievances of Excommunication at *Rome*, or in the Roman Court, and provide that the same be done every where else, by the Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ecclesiastical Judges. And lastly, *that your Holiness* would command, That no person be excommunicated, or reputed for such, for any cause whatever, besides the plain and prov'd Crime of Heresie in matters relating to Religion; for that no person ought to be separated or removed from God and his Church, for any Temporal cause or otherwise, or for any other humane crime, except Infidelity or Heresie. To the same purpose is that of *Joh. Stumpius*, in his second Book of his *Chronicon Helvet. cap.* 29. where he says, That the Swedish Clergy, about the year 1245. (when *Henry Landgrave* of *Turing*, and after his death, *William* Earl of *Holland*, were chosen by the instigation of the Pope, in opposition to the Emperour *Frederick* the second, and *Conrade* his Son) taught with great constancy, among other things, That never was there such a Power granted to mortal man under the Sun, to prohibit Christians Spiritual Duties, and the Worship of God; and therefore did they continue to say Mass (says he) though the Pope had interdicted them, and denounced them Excommunicate.

FINIS.